The Perfect Way

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Chapter #1

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I see man engulfed in deep darkness. He has become like a house whose lamp has been snuffed out on a dark night. Something in him has been extinguished. But a lamp that has been extinguished can be relit.
I see as well that man has lost all direction. He has become like a boat that has lost its way on the high seas. He has forgotten where he wants to go and what he wants to be. But the memory of what has been forgotten can be re-awakened in him.
Although there is darkness there is no cause for despair. The deeper the darkness, the closer the dawn. In the offing I see a spiritual regeneration for the whole world. A new man is about to be born and we are in the throes of his birth. But this regeneration needs the cooperation of each of us. It is to happen through us and through us alone. We cannot afford to be mere spectators. We must all prepare for this rebirth within ourselves.

The approach of that new day, of that dawning, will only happen if we fill ourselves with light. It is up to us to turn that possibility into a reality. We are all bricks of the edifice of tomorrow and we are the rays of light out of which the future sun will be born. We are creators not just spectators. The need, however, is not only for the creation of the future, it is for the creation of the present itself, it is for the creation of ourselves. It is by creating himself that man creates humanity. The individual is the component of society and both evolution and revolution can take place through him. You are that component.

This is why I want to call you. I want to awaken you from your slumber. Don't you see that your lives have become quite meaningless and useless, totally boring? Life has lost all meaning, all purpose. But this is natural. Without light in man's heart there cannot be any meaning in his life. There cannot be any joy in his life when there is no light in his inner being.

The fact that we find ourselves superfluous and overburdened today is not because life in itself is useless. Life is one endless fulfillment. But we have forgotten the path that leads to that destination, to that fulfillment. We simply exist and have nothing to do with life. This is not living, it is just waiting for death. And how can waiting for death be anything but boring? How can it be a joy?

I have come here to tell you this: there is a way to awaken from this bad dream you have mistaken for life. The path has always been there. The path that leads from darkness into light is eternal. It is there for certain, but we have turned our faces from it. I want you to turn your faces towards it. This path is dharma, religion. It is the means of

rekindling the light in man; it is giving direction to man's drifting boat. Mahavira has said for those being swept away by the rapid current of the world, with its old age and its death, that religion is the only island of safety, the anchor, the destination and the refuge.

Are you thirsty for the light that fills life with joy? Do you want to attain the truth that gives man immortality? If so, I invite you. Accept my invitation -- for joy, for light, for deathlessness. It is simply a matter of opening your eyes. And then you will inhabit a new world of light. You don't have to do anything else, you just have to open your eyes. You just have to wake up and look.

Nothing in man has really been extinguished nor has he really lost direction, but if his eyes are closed the darkness spreads everywhere and all sense of direction is lost. By shutting his eyes a man loses everything; by opening them he becomes a king.

I am calling to awaken you from your dream of downfall to the majesty of an emperor. I wish to transform your defeat into victory, your darkness into light, your death into immortality. Are you ready to embark upon this voyage with me.?

Before we begin our work please accept my love. It is the only thing with which I can welcome you to the loneliness and seclusion of these hills. I have nothing else to give you. I want to share with you the infinite love the presence of God has created in me. I wish to distribute it. And the wonder of it is that the more I share it, the more it grows! Real wealth increases with distribution but the wealth that decreases by sharing is not real wealth at all. Will you then

accept my love? I see acceptance in your eyes and that they are overflowing with love in response.
Love begets love and hate begets hate. Whatever we give you it returned in kind. This is an eternal law. So whatever you desire is what you should give unto the world. You cannot receive flowers in exchange for thorns.
I see flowers of love and peace blooming in your eyes, and I am deeply gratified. Now there are not so many different people here. Love unites and transforms the many into one. Physical bodies are separate and will continue to be so, but there is something behind these bodies that brings people together and unites them in love. It is only when this unity is attained that anything can be said and that anything can be understood. Communication is only possible in love and in love alone.
We have gathered in this lonely place so that I can tell you something and so that you can listen to me. This telling and this listening are only possible on the level of love. The doors of the heart open only to love. And remember it is only when you hear with the heart and not with the head that you can really hear anything. You may ask, "Does the heart hear as well?" but I say that whenever there is hearing it is the heart alone that hears. So far the head has never heard anything. The head is stone deaf. And this is also true of speaking. Only when words come from the heart are they meaningful. Only words that come from the heart have the fragrance of fresh flowers; otherwise they are not only stale and faded but are like artificial flowers, made of paper.
I shall pour out my heart to you and if your hearts allow me to enter there will be meeting and communication. It is at

this moment of communion that the thing words are powerless to express is communicated. Many unsaid things can also be heard like this, and that which cannot be put into words, that which is between the lines can also be communicated. Words are very impotent symbols but if listened to in total peace of mind and in silence they become powerful. This is what I call hearing with the heart. But even when we are listening to someone we are full of thoughts about ourselves. And that is false listening. Then you are not true listeners. You are under the illusion you are hearing but as a matter of fact you are not. For right-hearing it is necessary for the mind to be in a state of perfect, silent watchfulness. You should simply listen and not do anything else. Only then can you hear and understand. And that understanding becomes a light and brings about a transformation in you. Without this state of mind you do not listen to anyone, you just go on listening to yourself. The tumult raging within you absorbs you. And when you are so engrossed nothing can be communicated to you. You seem to be seeing but you do not see; you seem to be hearing but you do not hear.

Christ also said, "Those who have eyes to see, let them see. Those who have ears to hear, let them hear." Did those to whom he spoke not have eyes and ears? Of course they had eyes and ears, but the mere presence of eyes and ears is not enough for seeing and for hearing. Something else is necessary and without it the existence or non-existence of eyes and ears is irrelevant. That something else is inner silence and watchful awareness. It is only when these qualities are there that the doors of the mind are open and that something can be said and heard.

I expect this kind of hearing from you during the period of this SADHANA Camp. Once you have mastered the art it becomes your lifelong companion. It alone can rid you of trivial preoccupation. It can awaken you to the great, mysterious world outside and you will begin to experience the eternal light of consciousness. That is what is behind the tumult of the mind.

Right-seeing and right-hearing are not only a necessity for this SADHANA Camp but are the foundation of all right-living. Just as everything is clearly reflected in a lake that is totally calm, without ripples, that which is the truth, that which is God will be reflected in you when you become calm and still like the lake.

I see such silence and calm coming to you and I see your eyes inviting me to say what it is I wish to say. They are urging me to share the truths I have seen that have moved my soul. Your hearts are eager and impatient to hear about them. Seeing that you are so willing and ready to hear me, my heart is impelled to pour itself out to you. In these peaceful surroundings, when your minds are perfectly calm as well, I shall certainly be able to say what it is I wish to say to all of you. It often happens that I must refrain from speaking when I see deaf hearts before me. Doesn't light remain outside when it find the doors of your house closed? In the same way I often stand outside many a house. But it is a good sign that your doors are open. It is a good beginning.

We shall start the five-day program of this Sadhana Camp tomorrow morning and by way of introduction I would now like to say a few things.

For one's sadhana, for the realization of truth, the mind has to be prepared in the way one prepares the soil for the cultivation of flowers. And so, I would like you to bear a few maxims in mind.

The first maxim is: live in the present. During the Camp do not be carried away by your habit of thinking about the past and the future. If you allow yourself to be carried away, the living moment, the really important thing will be wasted and will pass away uselessly. Neither the past nor the future exists. The past in only memory; the future, imagination. Only the present is real and alive. And if the truth is to be known it can only be known through the present.

During the Camp, please keep yourselves aloof from the past as well as from the future. Accept that they do not exist. Only the moment you are in exists. Only the moment in which you are exists and nothing else. You have to live in it and to live it completely. Sleep as soundly tonight as if your whole past has been cut adrift. Die to the past. And in the morning get up as a new man, because it is a new morning. Let him who went to bed not awaken. Let him go to sleep for good. Let him who is ever-new and ever-fresh arise.

To live in the present, keep remembering -- and stay on guard twenty-four hours every day to see that mechanical thinking about the past and future does not start up again. Watching is enough. If you watch, it won't start up again. Watching and awareness break the habit.

The second maxim is: live naturally. Man's entire behavior is artificial and the result of conditioning. We always wrap ourselves in a phony mantle and because of this covering we gradually forget our real being. Shed this false skin and

throw it away. We have not gathered here to stage a drama but to know and to see ourselves as we really are. Just as actors in a play remove their costumes and make up and put them aside after the performance, in these five day, you must remove your false masks and set them aside. Let that which is fundamental and natural in you come out -- and live in it. One's sadhana, one's path, developes only through simple and natural living. During the days of this Sadhana Camp be aware that you hold no position, have no profession, have no status. Divest yourself of all these masks. You are simply you, quite an ordinary human being with no name, no status, no class, no family, no caste -- a nameless person, a very ordinary individual. You have to learn to live like this because in reality this is what you are.
The third maxim is: live alone. One's sadhana is born in complete aloneness, when one is all alone. But generally man is never alone. He is always surrounded by others. And if there is no crowd around him on the outside, he is in the midst of a crowd inside. This crowd has to be dispersed. Inside, do not allow things to crowd in on you. And the same is true for the outside -- live by yourself as if you are all alone at this Camp. You don't have to maintain relations with anyone else. In the midst of these countless relationships you have forgotten yourselves. All these relationships -- enemy or friend, father or son, wife or husband -- have so engulfed you that within yourself you can neither find nor know your own being.
Have you ever tried to imagine what you are, away from these relationships of yours? Have you ever discarded the garb of these relationships and seen yourself quite separate from them? Remove yourself from all these relationships

and know that you are not the son of your father and mother, not the husband of your wife, not the father of your children, not the friend of your friends, not the enemy of your enemies -- and what remains is your real being. What remains in you is your self. During these days you have to live alone in that being.

By following these maxims you will be able to reach the state of mind that is an absolute necessity for carrying on your sadhana and for attaining peace and the realization of truth. As well as these three maxims, I wish to explain to you the two kinds of meditation we will begin tomorrow.

The first meditation is for the morning. During this meditation you must hold your spine erect, close your eyes and keep your neck straight. Your lips should be closed and your tongue should touch the palate. Breathe slowly but deeply. Concentrate your attention on the navel. Be aware of the tremor felt at the navel because of the breathing. This is all you have to do. This calms the mind and stills thoughts. From this emptiness you ultimately go inside.

The second meditation is for the night. Spread your body on the floor and let the limbs relax completely. Close your eyes and for about two minutes suggest to yourself that the body is relaxing. Gradually the body will become relaxed. Then for two minutes suggest that your breathing is becoming tranquil. The breathing will become quiet. Finally, for another two minutes suggest that thoughts are coming to a halt. This willed auto-suggestion leads to complete relaxation and emptiness. When the mind has become perfectly calm, be totally awake in your inner being and be a witness to the tranquility. This witnessing will lead you to your self.

You must practice these two meditations. But as a matter of fact they are really artificial devices and you are not to stick to them. With their help the mind's restlessness dissolves. And just as we no longer need a ladder after climbing, one day we have to give up these devices as well. Meditation attains perfection the moment it becomes unnecessary. This very stage is samadhi.

Now the night is well advanced and the sky is filled with stars. The trees and the valleys have gone to sleep. Let us also go to sleep now. How quiet and silent it all is! Let us also merge into this peacefulness. In deep sleep, in dreamless sleep we go to the very place where God dwells. This is the spontaneous, non-conscious samadhi that nature has bestowed upon us. With the help of this Sadhana Camp we can also reach the same destination. But then we will be conscious and aware. This is the difference and it is a great difference indeed. In 6the former we are asleep; in the latter we are wide awake.

Let us now retire into sleep with the hope that we will attain samadhi. When our hopes are accompanied by determination and right-endeavor they are bound to be fulfilled.

May God guide us along the path. This is my only prayer.

The Perfect Way

Chapter #2

Chapter title: The First Morning

4 June 1964 am

It is a delight to see you. In this solitary place you have come together to realize God, to find the truth, to know your own selves. But may I ask you a question? Is what you are seeking separate from you> You can search for someone who is away but how can you seek that which is your own self> Your own self cannot be sought in the sense in which everything else is sought because in this case there is no difference between the one who is seeking and the one who is being sought. You can seek out the world but you cannot seek your self. He who goes out in search of his self goes farther away from his self. It is important to understand this fact fully. Only then the search may be possible. If you want the material things of the world you have to look outside yourself, but if you want to find your self you have to be composed, unruffled, and to abandon all seeking. What you really are can only be seen in perfect calm and emptiness.

Remember that a search is also an excitement, a tension, that it is a desire and a passion as well. But the soul cannot be realized through passion. This is the difficulty. Passion indicates that one desires to become something or to attain something, while the soul is already there within one. The soul is what I, myself, am. Passion and the soul lie in the opposite directions. They are opposite dimensions. Therefore understand fully that the soul can be realized but it cannot be the object of desire. There cannot be any desire as such for the soul. All desire is worldly; no-desire is spiritual. It is desire and passion that make up the world. Whether this passion or desire is for money or for religion, for authority or for the realization of God, for worldly

pleasures or for the liberation of moksha, it makes no difference. All passion is ignorance and bondage.
I do not ask you to desire the soul. I only ask you to comprehend the nature of desire. The understanding of passion frees one from passion because it reveals its painful character. The knowledge of pain is freedom from pain. Nobody, having known pain, can want it. And when there is no desire, when the mind is neither disturbed by passion nor searching for anything, then at that very moment, at that calm and tranquil moment you experience your real authentic being. The soul declares itself when passion disappears.
Therefore my friends, I ask you not to hanker after the soul but to understand desire itself and to rid yourselves of it. Then you will know and will realize the atman, the soul.
What is religion? Religion, dharma, has nothing to do with thoughts or with thinking. It has to do with no-thinking. Thinking is philosophy. It gives you results or conclusions but does not bring you satisfaction. Dharma is contentment. The process of logic is the doorway to thought while samadhi is the gateway to contentment.
Samadhi is the result of shunya and chaitanya, of emptiness and consciousness. The mind must be empty but watchful, and in that state of tranquility the door to truth opens. Truth is realized only out of emptiness and one's whole life is subsequently transformed.
We reach the stage of samadhi through meditation, but what is generally understood as meditation is not true meditation. It too is thinking. Possibly the thoughts relate to the soul or to God but they are still thoughts. To what the thoughts relate makes no difference. In reality all thoughts

pertain to another, to an outsider. They relate to what is not the self, to the material. There cannot be thought about the self because for thought to exist, two are needed. Therefore thought cannot take you beyond duality. If one is to realize this unity, to live in the self and to know it, then meditation, not thinking, is the way.

Thought and meditation are in diametrically opposite directions. The former moves outward; the latter, inward. Thought is the way to know the other; meditation, the way to know the self. But thought is generally taken for meditation. This is a very serious and widespread mistake and I want to caution you against this fundamental error. Meditation means becoming actionless. Meditation is not action but a state of being. It is being steady in one's own self.

In action we come into contact with the outside world; in inaction, with ourselves. When we are not doing anything we become aware of what we are, but we are constantly involved in different activities and do not know ourselves. We do not even remember that we exist. We are deeply preoccupied. At least the body rests but the mind does not rest at all. Awake, we think;p asleep, we dream. Engrossed in these constant preoccupations and activities, we simply forget ourselves. In the press of our own affairs we lose ourselves. How strange this is! But it is a fact. We have become lost, not in the crowds of other people, but in our own thoughts, in our own dreams, in our own preoccupations and activities. We have become lost in ourselves. Meditation is the way to extricate ourselves from this self-created crowd, from this mental wanderlust.

By its nature meditation cannot involve any action. It is no-action. It is a term for an unoccupied mind. This is what I teach. It may look rather odd to say that I teach no-action and to say that we have gathered here to practice no-action but the language of man is very poor and very limited. Designed to express action only, it is never able to express the soul. How can what is fashioned for speech express silence? The world "meditation" suggests that it is some sort of action but it is by no means action of any kind. It would be wrong of me to say I was "practicing" meditation; it would be correct to say I was "in" meditation. It is just like love. I am in love, but love cannot be manufactured. Hence I say meditation is a state of mind. It is of prime importance to be clear about this at the outset.

We have not gathered here to do anything but have come to experience that state where we simply are, where no action takes place, where there is no smoke to suggest action and only the burning flame of being remains, where only the self remains, where even the thought that "I am" no longer remains, where simply "being" remains. This is shunya, emptiness. This is the point where we see not the world, but truth. It is in this void, in this emptiness that the wall that keeps you from knowing your self topples, that the curtains of thought rise and wisdom dawns. At this point you do not think, you know. Then there is vision; then there is realization.

But the words "vision" and "realization" are not quite appropriate because here there is no difference between the knower and the known, no difference between the subject and the object. Here there is neither the known nor the knower, simply knowing. In this context no word is

suitable. "No-word" is the only appropriate word. If anyone asks me about this state I remain silent -- or you might say I convey my answer through my silence.

Meditation is no-action. Action is something we may or may not do according to our wishes. But there is a difference between one's nature and one's actions. One's nature is not action, it is neither doing nor non-doing. For example, understanding and sight are parts of our nature, parts of our being. Even if we do nothing they will still be there. Nature is constantly present in us and only that which is constant and continuous can be called natural. Nature is not something of our making, it is our foundation. It is ourselves. We do not create it, it is an intrinsic cohesion. We call it dharma. Dharma means our nature; it means pure existence.

This constant and continuous nature of ours is suppressed by the scattered direction of our actions. Just as the sea is covered by waves and the sun by clouds, we are covered by our own actions. The layer of activities on the surface hides that which is deep inside. Insignificant waves hide from our view the unfathomable depths of the ocean. How strange it is that the mighty is suppressed by the trivial, that a speck in the eye renders mountains invisible! But the sea does not cease to exist because of the waves. It is the soul of the waves and is present in them as well. Those who know even recognize it in the waves, but those who do not know must wait until the waves subside. They can only look at the ocean after the waves disperse.

We have to dive into this ocean, into nature itself. We have to forget about the waves and jump into the sea. We have to

know our own depths where there is the sea without waves, where there is being without becoming.

This world of waveless and motionless knowing is always present in us but we are not aware of it. We have turned our faces away from it -- we look outside, we look at things, we look at the world. But bear one thing in mind -- we are looking, and what is seen is of the world. But the one who sees is not the world, it is the self.

If sight is related to the object that is seen it is thought; if sight is free from the object that is seen and turns towards the seer himself it is meditation. Do you follow my distinction between thought and meditation? Seeing is present in both thought and meditation but in the former it is objective and in the latter it is subjective. But whether we are in thought or in meditation, whether we are in action or in no-action, seeing is a constant factor. Awake, we see the world; asleep, we see dreams; in samadhi, we see our selves -- but in each of these conditions there is seeing. Seeing is constant and continuous. It is our nature. It is never absent no matter what the condition.

Seeing is even present in fainting. After we come out of a faint we say, "I don't know anything. I don't know where I was." Please do not think this is ignorance. This is also knowledge. If seeing had been totally absent, the knowledge of "I don't know anything" would not have been possible, and in that case the time that passed by in the faint would not have existed for you. It would not have been part of your experience; it would not have left any trace on your memory. But you know you were in a state where you were not aware of anything. This too is knowledge. And seeing is also present here. The memory has not recorded any

internal or external phenomena during this period, but our seeing has definitely noted, has definitely experienced this gap, this interval. And this experience of the interval, of the gap in the recording of events is later known to the memory as well. Similarly, during sleep even when there are no dreams, seeing is always present. When we awaken in the morning we are able to say we had such a sound sleep that we did not even dream. This condition too has been observed.

You must realize from all of this that conditions change, that the content of consciousness changes, but that seeing does not change. Everything in the realm of our experience changes; all things are in a flux. Seeing and seeing alone is ever-present. The seer alone is the witness to all this change, to all this fluidity. To know this constant and eternal seer is to know one's self. All else is alien, the other. All else is samsara, the world.

This seer or witness cannot be attained or realized by any action, by any kind of worship or adoration, by any mantra or technique, because he is the witness of all these things as well. He is different and apart from all these things. Whatever can be seen or whatever can be done is different from and other than the witness. He cannot be realized by action but by no-action; not by effort but by stillness. He will be realized only when there is no activity, when there is no object to be seen, when only the seer or witness remains, when only seeing remains. When we are seeing but nothing is being seen, when we know but nothing is being known, then in this consciousness-devoid-of-content the knower of all is known. When there is no object to be seen the curtain in front of the seer drops away, and when

there is no object to be known knowledge becomes aware of itself. When there are no waves we can see the ocean; when there are no clouds we can see the blue sky.
This ocean and this sky are there in everyone and if you wish to know this sky, this space, you can. There is a path that leads there and it is present in everyone, available to everyone. And each one knows how to walk on this path. But we only know how to walk on it in one direction. Have you ever thought of the fact that a road cannot lead in one direction only? Inevitably each road travels in two directions, in two opposite directions. Otherwise it is not a road; it cannot exist. The road that has brought you here to the seclusion of these hills is the same road that will take you back. There is only one road for coming as well as for going. The same road will serve both purposes. The road will be the same but the direction will not be the same. The road that leads to samsara, to the world, is the same as the road that leads to the self. Only the direction is different. What has been in front of you for so long will now be behind you and you will have to direct your sight to what was at your back. The road is the same. We must simply turn, do an about-face. We must turn our backs on what we were facing and face that which was at our backs. Please ask yourself where your face is turned now. What are you seeing? In what direction is the current of your vision, of your consciousness, flowing? Experience it. Observe it. You will find it is flowing outwardly. All your thoughts are about the world outside. All the time you are thinking about external things, about the world outside. When your eyes are open you see outside; when they are closed you see the same outside -- because the forms and

images of outside things that are imprinted on the mind rise up and surround us even when our eyes are closed. There is a world of objects outside and inside us there is another world of thoughts, the echo of outside things. Although it is inside this other world it is also outside, because the "I", the ego, is outside as well. The witness also sees the "I", the ego, so therefore that too is outside.

We are surrounded by objects and by thoughts, but you will see on deeper consideration that being encircled by objects is no hinderance on the path of self-realization, while being surrounded by thoughts is an obstacle. Can objects encircle the soul? Objects can only encircle objects. The soul is surrounded by thoughts. The current of vision, of consciousness, flows towards thoughts. Thoughts and thoughts alone are in front of us everywhere and our sight is curtained by them.

We must turn our faces from thoughts towards thoughtlessness. But this change of direction is revolutionary! How can it be done? First we must know how thoughts are born and only then can we stop them from coming into being. Generally so-called seekers begin to suppress thoughts before they understand how they are born. Some of them my go crazy trying but none of them; will ever be free of thoughts. The suppression of thoughts does not help because new thoughts arise every moment. They are like those giants of mythology who, when one head was lopped off, grew ten more.

I do not ask you to destroy thoughts because they die of their own accord every moment. Thoughts are very short-lived; no thought endures for long. A particular thought does not last long but the thought-process does. Thoughts

die one after another but the flow of thoughts persists. No sooner does one thought die than another takes its place. This process takes place very quickly and this is the problem. It is not the death of a thought but its quick rebirth that is the real problem. Therefore I do not ask you to kill thoughts. I want you to understand the process of their birth and how you can rid yourselves of this process. One who comprehends the process of the birth of thoughts can easily be freed from it. But one who does not understand the process goes on creating fresh thoughts and at the same time tries to resist them. Instead of thoughts coming to an end, the consequence is that the person fighting them breaks down himself.

Again I repeat: thoughts are not the problem but the birth of thoughts is the problem. How they are born is the problem. If we can stop their coming into being, if we can exercise thought birth-control, the thoughts that have already been born will disappear in a moment. Thoughts die out every second but their total destruction does not happen because new thoughts spring up incessantly.

I say it is not that we have to destroy thoughts but that we have to stop their coming into being. Stopping their birth is as good as their destruction. We all know that the mind is fickle. But what does this mean? It means that no thought endures for long. It is born and it passes away. If we can only stop its birth we will be saved from the violence involved in killing it and it will die of its own accord.

How is thought born? The conception and birth of a thought is the result of our reaction to the outside world. There is a world of events and objects outside and our reaction to this world is alone responsible for the birth of

thoughts. I look at a flower. Looking is not thinking and if I simply go on looking no thought will be created. But if as soon as I look at it I say, "It is a very beautiful flower," a thought has been born. If on the other hand I continue looking at the flower I will experience and enjoy its beauty, but no thought will be born. But as soon as we have an experience we begin to express it in words. With this expression of experience through the symbols of words, thought comes into being.

This reaction, this habit of expressing experience in words smothers the experience, the realization, the vision, with thoughts. The experience is suppressed, the vision is suppressed and only words are left floating in the mind. These very words are our thoughts. These thoughts are very short-lived so before one thought dies away we transform another experience into thoughts. This process continues throughout our lifetimes. And we are so filled with words and so overwhelmed by them that we lose ourselves in them. To give up the habit of wrapping our vision and our experiences in words is to control the birth of thoughts. Please understand this.

I am looking at you, and if I just keep on looking at you without expressing it in words, what will happen? As you are now you cannot even imagine what will happen. There will be a great revolution, the likes of which has never been seen before. Words get in the way and stop that revolution from taking place. The birth of thoughts hinders that revolution. If I keep on looking at you and do not give it any expression in words, if I simply keep on looking I will find during the process that a wonderful and divine grace descends upon me and that a quality of emptiness, of the

void, is spreading all around. And in this emptiness, in this absence of words, the direction of consciousness takes a new turning and then I do not see only you but even the one who watches over us all gradually begins to appear. There is a new awakening on the horizon of our consciousness, as if we are waking from a dream, and our minds are filled with pure light and infinite peace.

In the final analysis I wish to say that in this Sadhana Camp we must make this one experiment -- and that is not to allow our vision to be smothered by words. i call this the experiment of right-mindfulness. You must remember, you must stay aware so that words are not formulated. It is possible to stop words evolving because they are just a habit of ours after all. A newborn child views the world without the intermediary of words. This is pure, direct vision. Later he gradually forms the habit of using words because words are helpful and useful in his external life and in the world outside. But what is useful in the outer life becomes an impediment in knowing the inner life. It is because of this that even the old must reawaken in themselves a child's capacity of pure vision in order that they may know their selves. They knew the world with the help of words and now they must come to know their selves with the help of the void, of emptiness.

What are we to do in this experiment? We will sit quietly, keeping the body relaxed and the spine erect. We will stop all movement of the body. We will breathe slowly and deeply and without any excitement. We will silently observe our own breathing and we will listen to any sounds falling on our ears from outside. We will not react in any way; we will not give them a second's thought. We will let

go into a state of mind where, without the interference of words, we will simply be a witness. We will stand at a distance and watch whatever is taking place. Don't try to concentrate at all. Simply be quiet and watch whatever is happening. Listen. Just close your eyes and listen. Listen quietly in silence. Listen to the chirping off the sparrows, to the swaying of the trees in the wind, to the cry of a child, to the sound of the water wheel at the well. Simply listen. And do nothing else.

First, within yourself, you will experience a throbbing of the breath and a beating of the heart -- and then a new kind of quiet and peace will descend upon you. You will find that although there is noise outside there is silence inside. You will find you have entered a new dimension of peace. Then you will find that there are no thoughts, that only pure consciousness remains. And in this medium of emptiness your attention turns towards the place that is your real abode. From the outside you turn towards your home. Your vision has led you inwards. Simply keep watching. Watch your thoughts, your breath and the movement at the navel. No reaction. The result will be something that is not a creation of the mind, that is not of your creation at all. This is in fact your being, your existence. This is the cohesion that sustains us all. It reveals itself unto us and then one's own self, the biggest surprise of all, appears.

I recall a tale. A sadhu, a seeker, was once standing on a hill. It was early morning and the sun was beginning to shine. Some friends were out for a walk. They saw the sadhu, standing all alone. They asked each other, "What can this sadhu be doing here?" One of them said, "Perhaps his cow often gets lost in the jungle and he is standing on

the hill looking for her." The other friends did not agree. Another said, "From the way he is standing, he does not seem to be looking for something. He rather seems to be waiting for somebody, perhaps a friend who accompanied him and has been left behind somewhere." But the others did not agree with this either. A third one said, "He is neither searching for any one nor waiting for anyone. He is absorbed in the contemplation of God."

They could not agree so they approached the sadhu himself to clarify the situation. The first one asked, "Are you looking for your lost cow?" The sadhu replied, "No." another asked, "Are you waiting for someone then?" To this he answered, "No." The third one asked, "Are you contemplating God?" Again the sadhu replied in the negative. All the three were amazed. Together, they asked him, "Then what are you doing here?" the sadhu said, "I am doing nothing. I am just standing. I am just being."

We have to exist this simply. We have to do nothing. We have to give up everything and just be. Then something that cannot be put into words will happen. The experience that will come to pass cannot be expressed in words. It is the epitome of experiences. It is the realization of the truth, of one's self, of God.

The Perfect Way

Chapter #3

Chapter title: The First Evening

4 June 1964 pm

Question 1
THE FIRST QUESTION: IS THERE A CONFLICT BETWEEN RELIGION AND SCIENCE?

No. The knowledge of science is incomplete. It is as if there were light all over the world while in your own house there was darkness. With such imperfect knowledge, without the knowledge of one's self, life simply turns into misery. For life to be crowned with peace, contentment and fulfillment, it is not enough to know material things alone. That way one may find prosperity but not fulfillment. That way one may have possessions but one will not have light. And without light, without knowledge, possessions become a bondage, a noose of one's own making with which to hang oneself.

One who knows only the world is imperfect and imperfection leads to misery. By knowing the world one gains power. And science is a search for knowledge and power. Hasn't science put the secret keys to limitless power into mankind's hands already? But nothing worthwhile has come out of this attainment of that power. Without a doubt man has power but he does not have peace. Peace is to be had by knowing God, not material things. This search for God is religion.

Power without peace is self-destructive. The knowledge of material things without the knowledge of the self means power in the hands of the ignorant. Nothing good can come of it. The conflict that has prevailed between science and religion has so far had disastrous results. Those who have only researched the realm of science have become powerful but they are restless and unhappy. And those who have

only done research in religion have no doubt attained peace but they are weak and poor. Thus the sadhana, the search that has been carried on so far is imperfect, partial. So far there has never been a full and complete sadhana for truth. I want to see power and peace in their perfection. I want a synthesis, a harmony of religion and science. This will give birth to the perfect individual, to the perfect culture, to a people rich in inner values and in outer achievements. The individual is neither the body nor the soul but a combination of the two. Therefore anything based on any one of these alone is incomplete.

Question 2
THE SECOND QUESTION: WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ABOUT RENOUNCING WORLDLY LIFE? IS SANNYAS, BECOMING A SEEKER, ONLY POSSIBLE IF ONE RENOUNCES THE WORLD?

There is no conflict between the world and sannyas. It is not the world but ignorance that one must renounce. Giving up the world is not sannyas. The awakening of knowledge, of self-knowledge, is sannyas. This awakening leads to a renunciation, not of the world, but of attachment to it. The world stays where it is and as it is but we are transformed. Our outlook is transformed. This transformation is very fundamental. In this awakened state we do not have to give up anything. What is useless and superfluous automatically drops like the ripened fruit from a tree. Just as darkness disappears at the coming of light, at the dawn of knowledge impurities pass away and what remains thereafter is sannyas.

Sannyas has nothing to do with the world. It has to do with the self. It is the purification of the self. It is just like the purification of alloyed gold.
Looking at life from the standpoint of self-ignorance is samsara, worldliness; looking at life from the standpoint of self-knowledge is sannyas. There fore whenever anyone says to me that he has "taken" sannyas it seems false to me. This "taking" of sannyas creates the impression it is an antagonistic act against the world. Is sannyas something that can be taken? Can anyone say he has "taken" knowledge? And will any knowledge taken like that be worth its salt? Taken-sannyas is not real sannyas. You cannot put on a mask of truth. Truth has to be awakened. Sannyas is born. It comes through knowledge. And in that knowledge we go on being transformed. When our knowledge is transformed our outlook is changed and our behavior is transformed automatically. The world stays where it is and sannyas is gradually born within us.
Sannyas is the knowledge that "I am not the body"; it is the knowledge that "I am the soul". When this knowledge dawns, ignorance and attachment drop away. The world was there outside and it will still continue to be there. But inside there will be the absence of attachment for it. In other words, there will be no world, no samsara inside.
To try to cling to the outside world is ignorance and to try to renounce it is also ignorance because in both these states you continue to be related to it. Attachment to the world and disgust for it are both ignorance. Both are relationships with the world. The absence of this relationship is freedom, freedom both from attachment and from aversion. It is not

just aversion or disgust. This absence of attachment and aversion I call sannyas.
Freedom from both attachment and aversion is attained through knowledge. Attachment is a kind of ignorance and the reaction one has to being fed up with attachment is aversion. This reaction too is ignorance. In the first case a person runs towards the world; in the second case, away from it. In both cases he runs. But little does he know that the joy of the one enshrined within us is not to be attained by running after the world or by running away from it but by being firmly lodged in one's own self. We must neither run towards the world nor from it. We have to move within, to our real selves.
Remember, we must move into our selves. This coming into one's self is impossible with attachment or with aversion. It is only possible by one's becoming a witness to the inherent conflict between attachment and aversion. There is one within us who is the witness to both our attachments and our aversions. We have to know him, he who is simply a witness. By knowing him we automatically attain freedom from both attachment and aversion. Knowing him is the natural result of self-knowledge.

Question 3
THE THIRD QUESTION: DO YOU THINK RENUNCIATION OF HOME AND FAMILY IS USELESS?

I remember a maxim of Mahavira's. He said, "Attachment is possession." He did not say that possession was attachment. Why? Because of our ignorance, because of

our foolishness, we are attached to worldly objects. Inside we are empty and we therefore want to fill ourselves with outward objects in order to delude ourselves into believing we are important entities. If one gives up attachment under these conditions and ignorance remains, can one really get rid of attachment? One will be rid of things but not of attachment. It will still be there.
If one leaves his home for an ashram, the attachment to the ashram will take the place of his attachment to his home. If one leaves his family to join a sect he will be as attached to the sect as he was to his family. Attachment is on the inside and it will express itself under any new conditions.
Therefore those who know have advised renunciation of desire and of ignorance, not of material objects. Once knowledge dawns the things that are of no use do not even have to be abandoned, they automatically drop away.

Question 4
THE FOURTH QUESTION: SHOULD WE CONCENTRATE OUR MINDS IN ORDER TO ATTAIN THOUGHTLESSNESS?

I do not ask you to concentrate. Concentration is a kind of coercion, a kind of tension. If one concentrates on some idea, on some form or image or on some word, it will neither lead to thoughtlessness nor to the awakening of consciousness but to an unconscious state of mental stupor. It is like auto-hypnosis. Forced concentration leads to unconsciousness. And it is an error to mistake this unconsciousness for samadhi. Samadhi is neither a state of unconsciousness nor of stupor, samadhi is the realization of

perfect consciousness. Samadhi is the combination of thoughtlessness and perfect consciousness.

Question 5

THE FIFTH QUESTION: HOW ARE WE TO WATCH THE PROCESSES OF INHALING AND EXHALING IN MEDITATION?

Hold the spine erect. Do not allow it to bend. The body is in a state of natural balance when the backbone is held erect. In that position the gravitational pull of the earth has a uniform effect on the body and it is easy to free oneself from its attraction. When the force of gravity is at its minimum the body does not interfere in one's becoming empty, in one's becoming devoid of thoughts. Hold the backbone erect, without tension or rigidity in the body. Allow the body to relax as if it were hung on the spine like a piece of cloth on a peg.

Relax the body completely and then breathe slowly and deeply. The inhaling and the exhaling will move the naval center up and down. Continue to watch this movement. It isn't necessary to concentrate on it, just watch it. Be a witness to it. Bear in mind I am not advocating concentration. I am advising simple watchfulness and awareness. Breathe as children do -- their chests do not move; their stomachs move. This is the natural process of inhalation and exhalation. As a result of this natural breathing, peace descends upon us, becoming deeper and deeper.

Because of the disturbed and tense condition of our minds we have gradually lost the ability to breathe deeply and

fully. By the time we have grown to adolescence, superficial and artificial breathing has become a habit. You have undoubtedly noticed that the more your mind is disturbed, the less your breathing is natural and rhythmical. Breathe in a natural way -- rhythmically, effortlessly. The harmony of natural breathing helps dispel mental restlessness.

Question 6

THE SIXTH QUESTION: WHY DO YOU ADVISE US TO OBSERVE THE BREATHING PROCESS?

I do so because breathing, inhaling and exhaling, is the bridge between the body and the soul. The soul resides in the body through breathing and because of breathing. By becoming aware of one's breath, by direct knowledge of breathing, a person gradually experiences that he is not the body.

I am the body but I am not the body alone. It is my abode but not my foundation. As the direct realization of breathing goes deeper, one experiences the presence, the proximity of the one who is not the body. For a moment one sees clearly that the self is not the body. Then you will see the three layers, the three sheaths of your personality -- the body, the breath and the soul. The body is the shell; the breath is the bridge, the connecting link; the soul, the self, is the foundation.

The role of the breath on the path to self-realization is a most important one because breathing is the central point. On one side we have the body; on the other, the soul. We already exist on the physical level but what we yearn for is

to be within the realm of the soul. But before this can be done it is essential to move onto the plateau of prana, of the breath. Only then can one enter the kingdom of the spirit. Watching at the level of the breath, one can look both ways. From here, the paths leading to the body and to the soul become clear. Although the road is one and the same, the two directions stand out clearly. And the result is that a step towards the inner, towards the realm of the soul, becomes more of a possibility. I hope you now understand why I stress breathing so much.

Question 7

THE SEVENTH QUESTION: WHY DO YOU SAY THAT DHYANA, MEDITATION, IS NO-ACTION? IS IT NOT AN ACT AS WELL?

Look here, please. My fist is closed. To close my fist I must make a positive action. Closing is an action. But when I wish to open it, what must I do? I don't have to do anything to open it. If I simply drop the effort of closing the fist it will open automatically and the hand will return to its natural and normal state. Therefore I won't call opening one's fist an action. It is no-action, or if you like you can call it negative action. But that makes no difference; it is the same thing. I won't argue with words. Please understand what I am telling you. Please understand the real significance of it.

By calling meditation "no-action", I wish to indicate that you should not regard meditation as a task or an activity. Meditation is free from such occupations. It is a natural state and you cannot change it into any kind of mental

tension. If meditation becomes a mental tension it will neither lead you to your natural state nor to mental peace. Tension is a sort of restlessness and if one wants to attain peace one should start out by becoming quiet. If there is neither peace nor quiet at the first stage there will certainly be none at the last. The final stage is just the culmination of the first.

I see people going to temples and I see them worshipping their gods. I also see them sitting in meditation. But for all of them it is an activity, a sort of tense restlessness, and it is sheer folly for them to expect all this activity to yield the flowers and fruit of serenity. If you want peace, if you wish to be peaceful it is essential that you start out in peace this very moment.

I want to say this to you as well: do not search for truth. There is ego in searching and it is the ego that is the obstacle. Just lose yourself. Lose your identity. Simply stop being yourself. It is only when the ego, the "I", ceases to be that the one who is really you is seen. It is only when the feeling of ego, of "I-ness" disappears that reality is seen. Only by losing oneself does one attain one's self. Just as new life sprouts from a seed only when the seed breaks apart and ceases to be, the shoot of immortality springs up only when the seed, the "I", the sheath of the soul also breaks apart and ceases to be. Please remember this precept: to attain your self you have to cease to be. Immortality can be had at the cost of death. A raindrop becomes the ocean when it loses itself in the ocean.

You are the soul but if you search for it within yourself you will find nothing but desire. Our whole lives are desire -- the desire to become something, to attain something.

Everyone wants to become somebody, to attain something. The race goes on every moment of our lives. Nobody wants to stay where he is. Everybody wants to be where he is not. Desire is a vague dissatisfaction with what one is or with what one has, and a blind longing for what one is not or for what one does not have. There is no finish to this mad race because as soon as one gets something it becomes useless and then desire begins encircling what one does not yet have. Desire is always for the unachieved.

Desire is like the horizon. The more you try to approach it the farther it pulls away from you. This happens because the horizon simply does not exist. It is just an appearance, an illusion. It is not real. If it were real it would come closer to you as you neared it; if it were unreal it would disappear at your approach. If it is neither real nor unreal, if it is an appearance, a dream, an illusion, a figment of the imagination, it will remain as distant as before, no matter how hard you try to get close to it.

Untruth is the opposite of truth. The world of illusion, maya, is not truth's opposite but its veil, its cover. Desire is not the opposite of the soul, of the atman, but its veil, its cover. It is a fog, a smoke that hides our being, that hides our existence. We chase after what we are not and as a consequence we cannot see what we are. Desire is the curtain that has fallen on the soul and because of this it is impossible for us to know our souls. Because we constantly want to become something else we cannot realize our very own beings.

If this race, this desire to become something else ceases even for a moment the one who exists, who is, becomes visible -- just as the sun becomes visible even if the sky is

cloudless only for a moment. The absence of this race I call dhyana, meditation. And what a sense of wonder one experiences at the moment one knows what really is! Then everything one ever desired is attained. The vision of the soul is the total satisfaction of desire because there, nothing is lacking.

Thought is a sign of ignorance. In knowledge there is no thought; there is direct vision. The path of thought will never take you to knowledge. Consciousness, free of thought, is the door to knowledge. Knowledge is not an achievement, it is a discovery. We don't have to achieve it, we have to discover it. It is ever-present within us. We have to dig it out as we dig out a well. The springs of fresh water lie deeply buried under the earth, under rocks and stones. As soon as these are removed the spring will burst forth.

I see piles of rocks and the stones of thought lying in the springbed of knowledge. As soon as these are removed we will have an unbroken stream of consciousness. Dig a well within yourselves. Remove the layers of thought with the spade of meditation. And by right-mindfulness and constant awareness render thought lifeless. Wipe it out of existence. What you will know then will be knowledge. Where there are no thoughts, where consciousness is not hidden by the smoke of ideas you will find knowledge.

I am not asking you to go into solitude. I ask you to create solitude within yourselves. A mere change of location won't help; a change of attitude is necessary. It is not the environment but our mental attitude that is the central and most important point. A man may go into solitude but if there is no solitude within him he will even be surrounded

by a crowd in his lonely retreat, for the crowd within him will be there as well.

My friends, the crowd is not outside, it is within you. You are surrounded by a crowd within so how will running away from the crowd outside help? The crowd that is with you now will go with you into your solitude. Running away from the crowd is useless. The crowd of desires within must be removed. Therefore don't seek solitude somewhere else. Just be solitary within. Don't go into seclusion but create desirelessness within. The moment you realize this, peace, bliss and ecstasy will permeate you. And at this moment of moments you will realize there never has been any crowd, nor has there ever been any outside world. Everything was within you! The creator and the creations are not separate from each other. They are, in truth, one and the same. It must have been at such a blissful moment that the mystic of the Upanishads exclaimed "Aham brahmasmi -- I am he, the creator, I am God."

The dust of the ages lies heaped on our minds. Old customs, old traditions and superstitions have enveloped us, just as a ruined or deserted house is full of spiders' webs and inhabited by the birds of darkness. In the same way we are stuffed with thoughts borrowed from others. And these borrowed thoughts about truth and about God are great obstacles. They keep us from knowing the truth. And so the search for the self, the search that can awaken our sleeping consciousness never starts in us.

Before one can know truth oneself it is necessary to rid oneself of the knowledge borrowed from others. This is not knowledge, it is simply information. Brush off all this information taken from others and from old traditions, like

you would brush dust off your hat. Then you will have a clear look, and the curtain between the truth and yourself will be there no more. The crowd of thoughts stands between them like a wall.

There is a world of difference between knowing about the truth and knowing the truth itself. Knowing about the truth is slavery to dead, borrowed knowledge; knowing the truth itself is the free expanse of the sky of self-realization. One takes away your ability to fly; the other gives you wings that can take you to God.

It is because of this that I am speaking to you about the void, about emptiness. Emptiness removes the burden of thought. Just as a man must leave his burden on the plain before climbing the mountain, one must be free from the burden of thought before setting out on the expedition to truth. The lighter a mountaineer becomes the higher he will be able to climb. In the same way, one who wants to climb the mountain of truth will scale heights in direct proportion to his burdenlessness, to his emptiness. Those who aspire to the peak, to the supreme being, must reach that ultimate emptiness where being becomes non-being. The apex of perfection happens in the profound depths of emptiness and the music of existence comes out of the silence of non-existence -- and then one knows that nirvana itself is the realization of brahma, of the creator, of God.

Since truth is unknown how can it be known by thought? Thought too is known. The effort is altogether absurd. There is no path leading from the known to the unknown. The known cannot take us to the unknown. It is unthinkable. It is impossible. The known can only move within the circle of the known. No matter how hard I think

within the realm of the known there is no possibility of going beyond it or of moving out of it. I will no doubt move but it will be in a circle, like a bullock turning a waterwheel. I will cover the same ground again and again without going anywhere. So far nobody has ever been able to reach the truth by thinking. Those who have reached that destination have come some other way. I do not consider Mahavira, Lao Tzu, Buddha or Jesus as thinkers. None of their attainments was the result of thinking. Then how did they reach their goal? It was not by walking along the path of thought but by taking a jump away from it. You cannot reach the unknown walking along the beaten path of the known. You have to leave that path and take a jump into the unknown.

Please understand the significance of the word "jump". Get to know this "jump" well. You too have to take it. You are at the level of thought. You are standing in thought, you are living in thought and you have to take a jump from there into the realm of thoughtlessness. You have to jump into a world where there is nothing but silence. You will have to jump from sound into silence. Will just thinking about this jump take you there? Are you going to think about how to take the jump? No, you will be yoking yourself once again to the wheel of thought and that won't take you anywhere. Don't think -- wake up! Watch the process of thought. Look at how it moves in circles. Simply watch. And while you are watching you will find, at some propitious moment, that you have taken the jump without any effort and that you are in the unplumbed depths of emptiness. The moment you leave the shore of the known you will find that your boat sails smoothly on the ocean of the unknown.

And what a joy it is to sail like this, to sail the ocean of the unknown! How can I describe it? Your restlessness does not allow you to see. Eyes that are filled with tears cannot see. And whether they are filled with tears of joy or tears of sorrow makes no difference. Eyes that are filled with anything cannot see the truth. To see the truth, eyes that are empty are needed. Only an eye that is like a mirror, with nothing in it, can see the one that is everything.

I will tell you about an incident that happened in a village. Someone asked me how to find God. I replied with a question, asking him if he had already found himself since he had now set out to find God. We want to know God but we don't know our own selves! We don't even know what is closest to us! No being, no existence is closer to us than the self -- so ignorance must first be attached and defeated at this point. One who is ignorant about his own self cannot attain knowledge on any other level.

The flame of knowledge first begins to burn in man's inner being. It is the east of knowledge and the sun of knowledge rises there. If there is darkness there you can be certain there cannot be light anywhere else. Know yourself, not God. This ray of light will ultimately grow into the sun. It is by knowing one's self that one realizes that there is sat-chit-anand, that there is being, consciousness and bliss, but that there is no "I", no ego. That very realization is the realization of God.

Man is a soul shrouded by an ego. And this is ignorance. A soul that is rid of the ego is God. And this is knowledge. Where are you going in search of your soul? In any of ten directions it is nowhere to be found. But there is one more

direction, an eleventh. Do you know it? I will show you this direction.

You yourself are that eleventh direction and you can find this direction if you stop looking in the other ten. The eleventh direction is not like the other ten. In reality it is not a direction at all. It is no-direction, the negation of direction. It takes you where you have never left. It is your own entity, your own natural state. All of the ten directions go outward. The world is their creation. The ten directions are the world. They are the distance. But the one that knows all of these directions and moves in them is certainly separate from them, certainly different from them -- otherwise he could neither know them nor move amongst them. He moves and at the same time does not move. If he is not firmly established in his own being he is unable to move, because at the center of all his movement there is motionlessness, because at the center of his revolving wheel there is fixedness. Have you ever noticed the wheels of a carriage? The wheels are only able to move because the axle is stationary. There is always a fixed thing holding and sustaining any movement. Life is unstable and transitory but the soul is permanent and stable. The soul is the eleventh direction. One does not have to go anywhere in search of it. Drop all searching and see who resides in you. Wake up to the one who is. This is possible by giving up the search. It is not possible by running but it is possible by stopping.

Stop and look. These two words are the crux of religion, the guides on one's sadhana and the whole key of yoga. Stop and look, and the eleventh direction opens up before you. Through it you enter the inner space. The inner space

is the soul. I see that you are all running after something but all this running ends in nothing but a fall. Don't you see people falling every day? Isn't that the result of all running? Doesn't all running end in death? But those who know this truth at the outset are saved from that disaster at the finish. I want you to stop and look. Will you do it? In the midst of your frantic running do you hear my call? Stop and look at who is running. Stop and look at who is seeking. Stop and look at the "I", at the self. As soon as the fever of running subsides all ten directions vanish and only that one direction, that no-direction, remains. It takes you to the root, to the source, to the fountain of supreme knowledge.
A sadhu once asked people what they were like before they were born. If you meed that sadhu what will you say to him? Do you know what you were like before you were born? Do you know what you will be like after your death? If you learn to stop and look, you can know. You can know the one that was before birth, the one that will be after death and the one that is inside now at this very moment. It is just a matter of turning around a little and looking. Stop and look.
I invite you to travel with me into this wonderful world. Stop and look.

The Perfect Way

Chapter #4

Chapter title: The Second Morning
5 June 1964 am

My friends, we must not fight with ourselves, we must know ourselves. All of the inconsistencies and self-contradictions that have developed in us because of our ignorance about the self will evaporate in the light of self-knowledge -- just like the dew that falls on the grass disappears with the rising of the sun.

I quite understand your curiosity and your eagerness for knowledge. You are eager to know and to understand the truth. You want to unfold the mystery of life so that you can attain its fullness. But what we now call life is not really life at all. It can just as well be called a long, drawn-out process of dying. It is true that you cannot attain life without knowing it. Birth is one thing and life is quite another. There is a vast difference between just managing to stay alive and the consummation of life. The difference is as great as that between death and immortality. Death is the inevitable end of life, while the perfecting of one's life is crowned by a life that is divine.

For those who wish to lead a divine life, who want to know God and truth, it seems to me there are two kinds of approach. One is the approach of morality; the other, of religion. Morality and religion are not usually viewed as two different paths. They are regarded as two successive steps on the same ladder. It is generally believed that for a man to become religious he must first become moral. But this is not my view.

I will tell you what I have known. I do not find that a moral man is essentially a religious man although a religious man is invariably moral. One does not become religious merely by becoming moral, nor is morality the starting-point, the basis of religion. On the contrary, morality is the result of

becoming religious. The flowers of morality bloom on the plant of religion. Morality is the expression of a religious life. I look upon religion and morality as two different paths -- not only different but opposite to each other. Morality, discipline, means the purification of conduct, the purification of behavior. It is an attempt to change man's personality on the periphery. This periphery of the personality is the result of our dealings with others. It is one's behavior, one's relations with others. How I behave or act with others is my behavior. Behavior is a relationship. I am not alone; I am surrounded by people on all sides. And since I am in a society, I come into contact with and have relations with someone or other every moment of my life. These inter-relationships seem to be what our lives are. And the goodness or badness of my behavior depends on whether my relationships are good or bad.

We are taught good conduct. We are told it is necessary because of society, that it is a social necessity. But society has nothing to do with you, with your simple, natural personality. From that point of view, society would lose nothing if you ceased to exist. It is only when you are related to someone or to something that you become important to society. It is not you but your dealings with others that are important to society. It is not you but your behavior that is significant. It is therefore not surprising that good conduct is the aim of the education transmitted by society. To society, man is his conduct and nothing more. But this education in good conduct, this morality society teaches creates an illusion. It has created a very fundamental illusion. It is only natural that those who are eager to realize God and to attain religion believe it is

necessary to become virtuous to attain truth and righteousness. It is natural that they believe the realization of God is only possible through right-conduct and that one must acquire virtue before the advent of truth. It is natural that they believe the realization of religion and truth will develop out of a life of morality alone, that morality is the base and religion the peak, that morality is the seed and religion the fruit, that morality is the cause and religion the effect. This line of thinking seems to be very clear and correct but I want to tell you that this apparently simple and clear line of thinking is totally misleading and it gives a perverted view of the true facts. The truth of the matter is something quite different.

As a matter of fact, the teaching of morality cannot make a man moral, let alone religious. it can merely make man social and being social is wrongly taken for being moral. Mere good behavior does not make a man moral. That transformation requires an inner purification. Without transforming your inner being you cannot change your conduct. To try to change the periphery without changing the center is a pipe dream. The effort is not only futile, it is harmful. It is suicidal. It is nothing but forcing affliction on oneself.

No doubt this suppression satisfies the needs of society but the individual cracks under it and is shattered. It creates a rift, a duality in him. His personality loses its natural simplicity and he suffers from the conflict within himself. It is a continuous struggle, an eternal internal fight that can never end in victory. This is satisfying the needs of society at the cost of the individual. I call this social violence.

Whatever man expresses through his behavior is unimportant. The really important things are the inner causes that lead to that behavior. Behavior is an indication of the inner spirit, it is not the root. Behavior is the outward expression of the inner spirit. Only ignorant people try to change the outward expression without changing the cause of that expression.

This kind of sadhana is useless; it can never bear fruit. It is like the behavior of a man who tries to destroy a tree by cutting off its branches. Such an action, instead of destroying the tree is more likely to promote its growth. The life of a tree is not in its branches, it is in its roots, in the invisible roots buried in the earth. It is the latent hopes and desires of the roots that have taken the form of the tree and its branches. How will cutting the branches help? If you really want to bring about a revolution in life you must go to the roots. The roots of man's behavior are in his inner being. Behavior follows the inner being. The inner being does not follow one's behavior. Therefore any effort to change behavior inevitably takes the form of suppression. And can suppression bring about any transformation? What is suppression anyway.? Suppression is not allowing spontaneous feelings to grow in the inner being and not allowing their expression; it is forcibly bringing up and expressing what is not really there.

But where will what we suppress go? Will we be free of it? How can we achieve freedom by suppression? The suppressed feelings will continue to be there within us, but they will now have to find deeper, darker and more unconscious recesses in which to live. They will enter still deeper regions. They will hide themselves where even our

awareness of suppression will not be able to locate them. But the roots that have gone deep will continue to sprout, the branches will blossom and bear fruit, and then there will be such a conflict between our conscious and unconscious minds that the ultimate result will be madness. Madness is the natural outcome of a civilization based on this kind of false, hollow morality. Therefore madness increases with the advance of civilization and the time may come when our whole civilization will end in madness. The last two great wars were this kind of madness and we are heading towards a third, perhaps the final conflict.

The explosions that happen in a man's personal life and those that occur in society -- violence, rape, immorality, brutality -- are all the results of suppression. A man cannot lead a moral and natural life because of suppressions and one day he simply succumbs to the tension. No doubt those who resort to hypocrisy save themselves from this inner conflict. They pretend to be what they are not. They are free from any inner conflict because they are always acting out some role.

Hypocrisy too is born out of morality based on suppression. It is a means of keeping oneself free of inner conflict. As I have already said, in our so-called moral lives we do not allow spontaneous feelings to grow and to be expressed but we express feelings that are not really there. The first of the two processes leads to suppression; the second, to hypocrisy. Ultimately, the first process turns you into a madman; the second, into a hypocrite. Neither of these results is any good; neither is worthy of you. Unfortunately, our civilization only offers these two alternatives. But there is a third alternative as well: living the life of an animal.

The criminal is born out of this alternative. If we wish to save ourselves from this, from becoming animals, then in our civilization we only have two alternatives.
Becoming an animal means complete surrender to unconscious instincts. This too is impossible because what has become conscious in man cannot become unconscious again. We seek this very unconsciousness when we get drunk. The search for intoxicants is an indication of our desire to become animals. Only when he is thoroughly drunk and unconscious is man in conformity with nature, with the animal. But this is tantamount to death. This is serious and deserves our very careful consideration.
How does a man become an animal when he is drunk and why does he seek intoxication in order to become an animal? It is indicative of the fact that consciousness in man is not part of the animal world or of nature but is a part of the Godhead. it is a possibility of the soul. It is a seed, not to be destroyed but to be nurtured. On its full growth depend freedom, liberation and bliss.
Then what shall we do? Civilization gives us three alternatives: that of the animal, of the madman and of the hypocrite. By any change is there a fourth alternative?
Yes, there is a fourth alternative. I call it religion. It is the path of intelligence and intuition, not of bestiality, madness or hypocrisy. it is not the path of indulgence, suppression or role-playing, it is the way of real life and of knowledge.
It bears the fruit of good conduct and it eliminates the animal in man; it does not suppress unconscious passions but frees man from their grip; it does not lead to the pretense of good conduct but to real living. It is not merely assuming a mask or any outward behavior, it is the

transformation of the inner being. It is not social but personal satisfaction. It does not change our relationships but transforms our very selves. Relationships automatically change as a consequence. It brings about a revolution in one's being, where one resides within oneself. Then everything around is automatically transformed.
Morality is social; religion, entirely personal. Morality is behavior; religion, the inner being. Morality is the periphery; religion, the center. Morality is personality; religion, the soul. Religion does not follow on the tail of morality but morality invariably follows religion. Morality cannot even succeed in making a man moral, so how then can it make him religious? Morality begins with suppression, with piling things on oneself, whereas religion starts with knowledge.
In life we find evil, impurity and untruth. We must find their roots. Where and how is evil born? Where is the center from which these poisons come and make one's behavior venomous? Even when one thinks of virtue, of good, why does evil drive away all these thoughts and engulf one, surrounding one's life, permeating one's conduct? Why does passion always re-route one's thoughts? We must be observant and find this out for ourselves. Conclusions borrowed from others do not help because it is during the process of observation, during self-observation, and by this observation alone that the power and energy to disintegrate and destroy the very source that begets and sustains evil is generated. In itself this continuous observation is a sadhana because it is not just a method of knowing evil but of eliminating it as well. By observing the "I" inside, by becoming awake and watchful towards it,

light reaches the dark recesses within. And this light not only illuminates the roots of one's conduct, it begins to transform them.

Always bear this maxim in mind: observation not only brings knowledge, it transforms as well. Actually, observation brings knowledge and knowledge causes transformation. Knowledge itself is transformation, the transformation of one's whole existence. It is just like digging away the earth to locate the roots of a tree and to expose them to the light. Not only will this enable me to know the roots well, but by bringing the roots out of the darkness and by separating them from the earth I can bring about their destruction as well. And while I keep on watching the roots of the tree, the branches will wither away.

Observation can bring about the destruction of the roots of passion. They cannot bear the light. Evil cannot bear knowledge. When Socrates said, "Knowledge is virtue," he most likely meant to convey this very thing. I too say the very same thing: knowledge is virtue; ignorance is evil. Light is morality; darkness, immorality.

Observation, the constant observation of oneself, of the mind's unconscious tendencies, awakens the consciousness and allows it to penetrate into the unconscious mind. The unconscious enters the conscious through the door of stupor, ignorance, intoxication and carelessness, and is able to dominate it. We have seen that animalistic tendencies develop out of attachment. Anger and lust grab hold of us only when we are unconscious and then we look for intoxicants to help satisfy our animal instincts.

Consciousness enters the unconscious mind through the overcoming of stupor, through vigilance, watchfulness and awareness, and it establishes its authority there. To the degree watchfulness and awareness grow in us and to the degree right-mindfulness and observation of our tendencies, acts, passions and desires develop in us, it is to that same extent that consciousness fills us. And those drives and outbursts of passion, those blind, unconscious impulses disappear because they can only exist in a condition of sleep, insensibility and delusion. They cannot exist in a state of consciousness.

Bear in mind that nobody has ever done anything wrong while in his right senses, while conscious. All sin is born out of attachment. it is attachment itself. To my mind, attachment alone is sinful. Observation banishes attachment. Therefore it is important for you to see what observation is and how it can be brought about.

What is self-observation then? I sit quietly, just as I explained yesterday when we spoke of the experiment in right-mindfulness, and I observe whatever happens within me. There is a world of thought and passions inside. I observe that world. I keep on looking at it just as a man standing on the shore looks at the waves in the sea. Krishnamurti has called this "choiceless awareness". It is completely detached observation.

Detachment means I make neither choice nor decision. I do not label any passion or desire as good or bad. I do not make any judgment between good and evil, between virtue and vice. I simply observe. I simply become a witness, standing aloof and apart, as if I have no interest other than knowing and watching. The moment a purpose creeps in,

the moment a choice or a judgment comes in, observation comes to an end. Then I am not observing; then I have begun to think.

Please try to understand the difference between thinking and observation. In this process we are not to think. Thinking is the action of the conscious within the conscious, while observation is the penetration of the unconscious by the conscious. As soon as thinking comes in, one begins to make a distinction between good and evil, and suppression starts in a subtle way. The unconscious then closes its doors and the knowledge of its mysteries is hidden from us. The unconscious reveals its secrets not to thought but to observation, because in the absence of suppression the impulses and tendencies of the unconscious rise up naturally, spontaneously, in their total nakedness and reality, and it is then no longer necessary to hide those impulses, tendencies and passions. The unconscious stands before us in its nakedness, completely uncovered. And what terror it causes! How frightened a man is when he sees the naked form that resides deep in his own self! He feels like closing his eyes to it. He feels like abandoning this observation of the depths and returning to the worldly plane.

This is the time when a man's courage and tranquility are put to the test. This, I would say, is the moment of atonement. Those who pass through this moment with courage and calmness become masters of knowledge and a wonderful mystery unfolds before them. They have a direct view of the roots of passion and they enter the very heart of the unconscious. And this entry brings them a kind of supernatural freedom.

From meditation to observation, from observation to knowledge, from knowledge to freedom -- this is the path. This is the path of religion, of yoga. I want you to understand this path and to walk along it. Then you will know the alchemy of the transformation f conduct by inner revolution. Then you will realize that religion, not morality, is the fundamental thing and that morality flows out of religion. it is not morality but religion that is the sadhana to be practiced. Morality follows in the wake of religion like the track so the wheel s of a bullock-cart follow the cart. If this becomes clear to you, you will see a very great truth, and a great illusion will be dispersed.

I look at the transformation of mankind from the standpoint of this inner revolution, of this penetration of the unconscious by the conscious. On the basis of this knowledge a new man can be brought into being and the foundations of a new culture and a new humanity can be laid. Such a man, one that has been awakened by self-knowledge, is naturally moral. He does not have to cultivate morality. Neither is it the result of his actions nor of his endeavors. it radiates from him as light radiates from a lamp. His good conduct is not based on opposition to his unconscious mind but comes out of the fullness of his inner being. He does everything with his total being. There is neither duality nor multiplicity in him, but unity. Such a man is integrated; such a man is free of duality.

And the divine music one hears when one has gone beyond all conflicts and shackles is neither of this world nor of this space. There is a timeless symphony, a blissful note, that reverberates in us at that moment of peace, innocence and

freedom from all discord. The very rhythm of this music brings one in tune with the infinite.
To me, this realization is God.

The Perfect Way

Chapter #5

Chapter title: The Second Evening
5 June 1964 pm

Question 1
THE FIRST QUESTION: DO YOU THINK IT IS A BAD THING TO BE MORAL?

No. I do not consider it bad to be moral but I do consider the illusion of being moral bad. It gets in the way of real morality.
False morality is an outer coating, a covering. It serves no purpose other than satisfying hypocrisy and in my view there is no greater immoral state of mind than that of hypocrisy and egoism. False morality makes a show of humility and of freedom from egoism, but beneath it the ego is nourished and flourishes. Do you not see the truth of what I am saying in the so-called sadhus and saints in this country? This so-called morality, adopted, cultivated and achieved by effort is nothing but acting, in my view. Often things in a man's inner mind are just the opposite. What appears on the surface is absent inside. There are flowers above and thorns below. And this continuous battle between behavior and the inner being, this unbridgeable

gap between consciousness and unconsciousness divides and disintegrates a man's personality. In such a man there is no harmony. And where there is neither harmony nor music there is no joy. In my view, a real moral life is an expression of joy.

Morality is an articulation of joy, a spontaneous expression. When joy flows from one's inner being it is expressed outside in good conduct, in morality. The fragrance of bliss that emanates from such a man is truly the goodness of life. Therefore I ask you to create harmony, not conflict. Please try to see this truth. Do not just listen to what I say but try to live it. Then you will see how with our own hands we have thrown our lives into an anarchy of conflict and inner duality -- lives we could have transformed into one continuous and beautiful dance to the divine music.

Morality comes of its own accord just as flowers appear on a tree. It is not an accomplishment. The seeds of meditation are sown and then the crop of morality is harvested. Morality is not something to be attained by effort. It is something that is accomplished, achieved, through meditation. From meditation, peace, harmony and beauty flow. And he who is peaceful within himself is incapable of making others restless. He who has music within him will find the echo of his own music reverberating from everyone around him, and he who has beauty within him will find that his behavior causes all ugliness to disappear. Is not all of this, in itself, morality?

Question 2

THE SECOND QUESTION: YOU SAY THAT MORALITY IS A SOCIAL UTILITY. IS IT QUITE USELESS TO THE INDIVIDUAL?

Morality or moral behavior is simply utilitarian as far as society is concerned but for the individual it is not a utility, it is a joy. Therefore, society's needs are satisfied even by pseudo-morality but this is not good enough for the individual. That you behave well towards others is good enough for society but it is not good enough for you. You must be able to see even this -- whether you are good inside yourself or not. Society is concerned with your personality, not with your inner being. But for you the personality is nothing more than apparel. You begin where this covering leaves off. Apart from and behind this mask of personality is your real being. And this is where real morality is born.
A society created by false morality is called a civilization, while a society consisting of men who have attained the reality of life is called a culture. This is the distinction between civilization and culture. Civilization is a utility; culture, inner harmony and joy.
Today we have civilization but no culture. yet we can create this culture if we all make an effort together. Civilization comes out of purifying our dealings with other people; culture, out of purifying ourselves, out of becoming virtuous. Civilization is the body; culture, the soul. Only those who are firmly rooted in their souls can create a culture.

Question 3

THE THIRD QUESTION: ISN'T RELIGION SOCIAL? IS IT TOTALLY PERSONAL?

Yes, religion is an absolutely personal matter. Society has no soul, no center of consciousness as such. Society is simply the product of our inter-relationships. It is the individual who has a soul and therefore religion must be individual as well. Religion is not one of my relationships, it is my being. The discovery of one's true nature, of one's real being, and its subsequent expression is religion. Religion, dharma, is self-knowledge. Since religion is not social, one's sadhana, one's practicing of religion, does not relate to a group, but one's religious experience does cast its light on the group, on society. Although the practice of religion is personal it also has its effect on society. When a man is filled with inner light his behavior is also permeated with it. The inner being is individual, personal, but behavior is social.

A sadhana can never be collective, for one has to come to know one's self not in the company of others, b;ut alone, all alone. Plotinus put it well: "It is the flight of the alone to the alone." It is quite true. The flight is indeed very lonely, companionless. But the joy that comes from the flight infects others and they are also moved. What is attained in loneliness, in the aloneness of one's self, spreads its fragrance on the four winds.

Question 4

THE FOURTH QUESTION: WHAT IS GOD?

God is not a person, he is an experience. The vision, the experience one has of the universe after the dissolution of the ego, is what I call God. There is no particular type of experience of God, rather, the experience of perfect and universal love is God. It has no center; it is all existence. All existence is its center. It is incorrect to talk of the experience of God but you can say the experience of perfect love is God.
Love is the relationship between two persons. When this same relationship exists between an individual and existence I call it God. The ultimate stage, the flowering of love, is God. And I am reminded here of a saying of Christ's: "God is love".
When the "I" disappears, what remains is love. When the walls surrounding the ego crumble, what remains is love. And love itself is God. It is therefore impossible to know god but it is possible to become God.

Question 5
THE FIFTH QUESTION: YOU SAID THAT THIS LIFE WE LIVE IS NOT LIFE AT ALL, BUT A LONG DRAWN-OUT PROCESS OF DYING. WHAT DO YOU MEAN TO CONVEY BY THIS?

It is quite true that what we call life is not life. If it really were life how could it end in death? Life and death are two contradictory things so how then can death be the fulfillment of life? Death is the end of birth, not of life. And because death comes at the end don't think it only starts at the end. It is present in birth itself. It starts the very day one is born. After birth we die every moment. When

this process of dying has been completed we call it death. What was in birth as a seed appears at the end in its fully-ripened form. Therefore nothing after death is for sure, but death is for certain. It is certain because it arrives with birth itself. Birth is just another name for death; it is the seed of death. Let this be carefully understood. You begin dying the day you are born. That is why I say that life as we know it is not life but a long process of slow, gradual dying. Because we are familiar with this gradual dying and not with life, we are always busy trying to save ourselves form it. All our plans and activities are aimed at some sort of security and self-defense. And what are we doing? Aren't we busy defending ourselves against death all the time? Men also become religious for the same reason, in defense. It is because of this that they take to religion when they sense death drawing near. For the most part, the religion of old men is of this type. I do not call this real religiousness. It is just an aspect of the fear of death. It is the last safety-measure. Real religiousness does not come out of fear but out of the experience of life.

We should be aware that whatever we know at present is nothing but death -- and this knowledge of death leads to immortality. The body dies; it is dying each moment. By watching the body, by waking up to an awareness of this mortal vessel we begin to experience that which is not the body. To know that which is not the body, to know the soul, is to know life in its reality because the soul was never born and therefore it never dies. The truth existed before your birth and it will continue to exist even after your death. This is life. Life is not a span between birth and

death -- on the contrary, birth and death are just so many incidents that take place during its course.

During meditation, when the mind is quiet and empty, something that is different and apart from the body can be seen. It cannot be seen when the mind is restless just as one cannot look into the depths of a lake when there are ripples on the surface. And so because of the continuous current of thought-waves rippling on the mind, what is hidden under them remains hidden -- and we take the surface for the whole truth. The body, which is only one's residence, seems to be all and everything. It creates the illusion that the body is one's being, one's life. You consider your totality as limited to the body and nothing more. This identification with the body, this illusion of being one with the body does not allow us to know our real selves, and we look upon the gradual process of dying that is taking place over a period of time as life. This is the same kind of mistake you would make if you looked upon the construction and destruction of your house as your own birth and death.

This darkness disappears with the advent of mental peace. The illusion created by this mental unrest is dispelled by tranquility. What was hidden by the waves is revealed by wavelessness. And then for the first time we know the inhabitant of this body. As soon as we know him, death stops being anything more than casting off of old clothes, and birth, a putting on a new ones. And then there is a being who needs no clothes. The only man I call alive is one who knows this kind of life. Those who look upon the body as their being are all still dead. Their real lives are yet to begin. They are in a dream, asleep, in a faint.

Without waking from this dream, without waking from this delusion that the body is his being a man will never be able to know his own self, his essence, his mainstay, his life. The world is full of the dead, full of the living dead, and the majority of people die without ever having lived. They are worn out trying to defend themselves against death and they never come to know who is within, immortal, beyond death.

Question 6
THE SIXTH QUESTION: I GATHER FROM YOUR WORDS THAT I AM DEAD. WHAT SHOULD I DO TO BECOME ALIVE?

My friend, if you think so only because of my words it is of no value. Forget what I have said and what others have said and then look again. You have to see it yourself. That vision itself will become a path leading you to life. Then you won't have to ask, "What should I do to become alive?" He who comes to realize that he is dead, that his existence and his personality have been dead all along, will at the same time begin to see that which is not dead. But in order for you to see this your mental restlessness must be cast off. Seeing, darshan, is only possible when the mind is quiet, empty, free of passion. At present there are only thoughts. There is no seeing, no DARSHAN Thinking what I have said to you7 is correct is also a thought in itself. This thought will not help at all.
Thinking cannot uncover truth because all thoughts are borrowed. All thoughts belong to others. They just hide the truth all the more. Have you ever realized that all your

thoughts are borrowed from others, that they really belong to others? You have amassed counterfeit capital. Do not depend on it because it is not capital at all. Castles built on this kind of capital are like the ones you build in dreams. They are not even as real as houses of cards.

I do not want to make you think. I do not want to fill you with borrowed things. I don't want you to think but to awaken. I want you to give up thinking and see. And then see what happens. Advance from thinking to seeing. This alone will lead you to the truth and to the real capital, to the real wealth that is your own. How this process of seeing-without-thinking removes the curtain from the mystery cannot be known without actually doing it yourself. Remember, there is no valuable experience in the world others can give you. Whatsoever can be given is never valuable. Nor can an experience ever be given. Material things can be given, taken, exchanged, but there is no way to barter live experiences. In the nature of experience, neither Mahavira, nor Buddha, nor Krishna, nor Christ can give you anything. And those who cling to thinking and accept their thoughts as the truth are the ones who are deprived of the truth. it is the truth he realizes by himself and not something he borrows from others that liberates a man.

Memorizing the GITA, the KORAN or the Bible will serve no purpose. It will not bring you knowledge. On the contrary, it will smother your own capacity for self-knowledge and you will never be able to stand face-to-face with truth. The worlds you have memorized from the shastras, from the scriptures, will always come between you and the truth. They will create fog and dust and it will

be impossible for you to see what really is. We must remove everything that stands between us and the truth. To know the truth no help is required from thought. Strip everything away and then you will open up. Then there will be an opening through which truth will enter you and transform you. Give up thinking and see. Open the door and see. This is all I have to say.

Question 7
THE SEVENTH QUESTION: DO YOU THINK THE STUDY OF THE SHASTRAS IS UNNECESSARY THEN?

What purpose will the study of the shastras, of the scriptures, serve? You can't attain knowledge that way. It will just train your memory. You can learn a few things, but learning and knowing are two quite different things. You learn about God, about truth, about the soul. You will be able to give ready-made replies to questions about them. But there is no difference between that and what the parrot in your house repeats every morning -- what it has been taught to say. Truth is not to be found in the scriptures. It is in the self, in your self.

The shastras are only words and they are meaningful only if one has realized truth within oneself. Otherwise they are not only useless, they are harmful. Truth cannot be known by learning the shastras but if you know the truth the shastras can certainly be known.
But what do I see before me? People are studying the shastras instead of the truth and are satisfied with the

knowledge they have gained from these studies. What hollow and false satisfaction! Does it not suggest that we really do not want to know the truth, that we only want people to believe we know the truth? anyone who really wants to know the truth is never satisfied with mere words. Have you ever heard of a man's thirst being quenched by the word "water"? And if it were quenched by a simple word, wouldn't that indicate there really hadn't been any thirst there at all?

If the shastras could teach us one thing, that the truth cannot be realized through them, it would be enough. This is their only use. If the word could only tell us that the word is useless it would serve its purpose. It would be enough if the shastras did not bring us contentment but created discontent for us, and if instead of giving us knowledge they made us aware of our ignorance.

I too am speaking words, and this is how the shastras came to be. If you just cling to the words my whole effort will be useless. No matter how many of them you memorize, they will serve no purpose. These too will imprison your mind and then you will wander in your self-made, word-made prison all of your life. We are all locked in prisons of our own making. If you want to know the truth, break out of this prison of words, tear down the walls and burn the throne of information to ashes. From these ashes knowledge will be born and in a free consciousness you will see truth. Truth will come sooner or later but you must make room for it in yourself. If you throw words out, truth will occupy the space that has been vacated.

Question 8

THE EIGHTH QUESTION: CAN'T MAN EVER CONQUER HIMSELF BY SUPPRESSION AND BY FIGHTING WITH HIMSELF?

What do you mean by the words "suppression" and "fighting with himself"? Don't they mean that the individual will be dividing himself? He will be fighting with himself. This means he will attack and defend at the same time. He will be both friend and enemy. His energy will be used by both sides. This will never lead to victory, it will only weaken him and shatter his strength. Imagine what will happen if I make my two hands fight with each other. The same will happen if I fight with myself. Such a fight is sheer foolishness.

My friend, you don't have to fight with yourself, you have to know yourself. The contradictions and the self-conflicts that have been born in us out of ignorance will disappear in the light of self-knowledge, just as the drops of dew on the greass evaporate as the sun rises in the morning. Victory over oneself comes through knowledge and not out of conflict, for there is nobody to defeat. There is no other, only ignorance. And if there is ignorance? What is there to defeat in ignorance? It vanishes the moment knowledge comes. Ignorance is just a negative approach, the absence of knowledge. He who fights with ignorance fights with a shadow. He is walking the path of failure from the very beginning.

This concept of self-war for self-conquest comes from the reflection of conflicts between enemies in the world outside. We want to commit violence in our inner world just as we commit violence against our enemies in the outer

world. What madness is this! Even in the outside world violence has never conquered anyone. Conquering and defeating are two very different things.
But in the inner world we cannot even use violence to defeat our so-called enemy because there is no such person to be defeated. Self-knowledge is not the result of conflict, it is the result of knowing. So I say: don't fight, know. Forget war and choose knowledge.
And let this be your maxim: discover and know yourself. Let there be nothing in you that is unknown to you. Do not leave a single corner dark and uninspected. if you become familiar with all your inner rooms, that knowledge will become self-conquest.
We are all aware that in dark houses, in corners and in cellars inaccessible to sunlight and to fresh air, snakes, scorpions and bats make their abode, and if the owners of these houses spend their lives outside them, never entering them, is it surprising or unnatural that their houses are reduced to such miserable states? This is what has happened to us. We are also the owners of such houses and we have even forgotten where the doors to enter them are. Because of our continued absence and the lack of light, they have become the shelters of our enemies.

Question 9
THE NINTH QUESTION: YOU SAY THAT THE SUPPRESSION OF ONE'S PASSIONS IS HARMFUL. DO YOU THEN MEAN TO SAY THAT INDULGING THEM IS THE PROPER COURSE?

I preach neither suppression nor indulgence. I preach the knowledge of suppression and indulgence. Suppression and indulgence are both ignorance, both are injurious. Suppression is just a reaction to indulgence. It is only the inverted form of the other. It is only indulgence placed upside down. It is not too different from suppression. It is the same thing standing on its head.

Someone told me about a sadhu who used to turn his face away from money. Is turning one's face away much different from one's mouth watering at the sight of money? The same thing will happen if you try to run away from greed. Greed will not cease to be, it will take another form. And the big problem is that in this other form it will be as strong as ever -- and more secure because now it is invisible to you. Therefore it will remain intact. In addition the illusion of greedlessness will have entered. This is like inviting two enemies in while trying to drive one out.

I want all of you here to know lust and to know anger. You are not to fight with them nor are you to follow them blindly. You should be vigilant. You should observe them and become well-acquainted with all their shapes, strengths and skills.

Have you ever noticed that anger disappears when you watch it? But you immediately begin to indulge it or to suppress it. Whatever the case, you don't observe it. It remains unseen and unknown. This is where we make our mistake, and indulgence and suppression both contribute to this error.

Apart from these two, there is a third alternative as well, and I would like to suggest it to you. It is to see and to observe your tendencies -- not to do anything with them,

simply to watch them. Once the eye begins to see them clearly and steadily you will find they drop away and disappear. They cannot stand to look you in the eye. Their existence is only possible in a state of illusion, and in one's watchful consciousness they become lifeless and die. Our delusion, our non-observation of them is their existence. They are like insects who live only in darkness. As soon as there is light they die away.

I also want to tell you that how other people see me is of no consequence. How I see myself is the important thing. But we are in the habit of seeing ourselves through other people's eyes and we forget that there is a direct and immediate way to see ourselves. This is the real way to see. It is direct. However, we crete false images of ourselves and wear masks to deceive others, and then we base our opinion of ourselves on how others see us!

This process of self-deception is with us throughout our lives. It becomes one of the primary obstacles on the path of self-realization. We must break through this barrier. At the outset it is necessary to break through all the self-deceptions, to know what you are like, to know yourself in your total nakedness, because only after this has been done can any real steps be taken in the direction of self-realization.

A man cannot enter the realm of truth as long as he has false conceptions about himself and as long as the delusion persists that the role-playing personality is the real self. Before we can know God, the almighty, the truth or our real beings, we must reduce to ashes the imaginary personality with which we have covered ourselves. This mask of deception does not allow us to live real lives; it

does not allow us to rise above the artificial lives we are acting out. Those who wish to walk the path of life must awaken from the false dreams in which they are living. Don't you ever feel you are acting, performing in a drama? Don't you ever feel you are one thing on the inside and quite another on the outside? In sane moments, when you are yourself, doesn't the awareness of this deception ever trouble you? If such questions do occur to you and do trouble you, this very fact can take you out of the drama, can take you from the stage to the solid ground, to terra firma, where you don't act out a role but are your own selves.

One must ask oneself this question: "Am I really the one I have been thinking I am?" This question must echo in the very depths of your being. It must rise in your depths with such acuteness and such awareness that there will be no room for you to even consider it might be an illusion. This question, this inquiry, this introspection brings about such a fresh awakening of consciousness in us that we feel we have been shaken out of sleep. Then we begin to see that the castles we built have been built in a dream, that the boats in which we have been sailing were made of paper. Your whole life begins to seem unreal, as if it were not yours but someone else's. In fact, it is not yours, but part of some drama you have been acting out -- a drama in which education, training, culture, tradition and society have cast you. But this drama does not have its roots in you.

We are hardly men. We are mere scarecrows, without any roots, without any foundation, like characters in a fairy tale, in a dream, with no existence in reality. I see you lost and moving in this dream. All your actions are done in sleep.

All your activities are in sleep. But you can always awaken from this sleep. This is the difference between sleep and death. You can awaken from the former but not from the latter. No matter how deep your sleep, there is always the possibility of awakening. Sleep has this potentiality hidden within it.

If you come face-to-face with yourself many illusions will be shattered, just as a man who considers himself very handsome is disillusioned when he stands before a mirror for the very first time. Just as there is a mirror for looking at the body, there is a mirror for looking at the self. I am talking about this mirror. Self-observation is this mirror. Do you really want to see the truth about yourself? Do you want to meet the person that is really you? And knowing there is the chance of seeing yourself in all your nakedness, do you not feel afraid? Such fear is quite natural. It is because of this fear that we constantly conjure up new dreams about ourselves and try to forget who we really are. But these dreams cannot be your companions; you cannot get anywhere with their help. They simply waste time and you lose the priceless opportunity that can lead you home. You must wonder why I insist so much on your seeing this nakedness, the ugliness and emptiness of yourselves. Wouldn't it be better to leave unseen what is unfit to be seen? And isn't it nice, isn't it a good idea to decorate what is ugly with jewelry and to cover what isn't worth seeing with curtains? Generally this is exactly what we do. This is the common custom. But this habit is very harmful because the wounds we hide o not heal. On the contrary they become all the more infected and dangerous. And then the ugliness we have covered up is not removed but enters the

inner currents of our personality. We go on sprinkling artificial perfume on the surface while foul odors prevail inside. And a time comes when perfume no longer helps and the inner odor or sickness begins to smell, when jewelry no longer helps and the underlying ugliness stands out.

I am not for sprinkling perfume; I am for eradicating foul smells. I am not for covering ugliness with jewelry and flowers; I am for doing away with ugliness and for awakening the beauty and music inside. In their absence everything else is pointless. All our efforts are useless. It is like trying to get oil by pressing sand.

And so I ask you to uncover what is hidden in yourself. Uncover yourself and know your self. Do not run away from yourself. And escaping from yourself is not possible. Where will you go? What will you achieve by running away? No matter where you go you will be with you. You can transform yourself but you cannot run away from yourself.

The first link in this chain of transformation is self-observation. And the wonder of wonders is that when one knows ugliness one is freed from it! To know the fear of the self is to be free from that fear; to know hatred is to be free from hatred. They are there because we do not look at them. They are after us because we are trying to run away from them. The moment we stop they will also stop -- just as our shadow runs with us when we are running and stops when we stop.

And if we can look at these things the whole situation will be immediately transformed. What we thought were ghosts and spirits were merely shadows! Because we were running

these ghosts and spirits ran after us -- and this made us run even more! The moment we stop running they become lifeless; as soon as we look at them they cease to exist. They are just shadows. And surely shadows can't do anything! There was the shadow of ugliness, so to cover it we clothed and decorated it with flowers. And thus we created an illusion. Now, when we see it was just a shadow and nothing else and that it is no longer necessary to clothe it, we are freed from the shadow and we realize that it has always been a shadow that was there. And this very realization gives us a vision of beauty, of the most beautiful.

I have had this vision. I stopped running away from shadows and that gave me the strength to look beyond them. And what I saw there, that truth, transformed everything. Truth transforms everything. Its very presence is a revolution. Therefore I say to you not to be afraid. See what is really there and don't look for shelter in dreams and imagination. The man who dares to give up these shelters is sheltered by truth.

This morning someone asked me what was meant by direct knowledge of oneself. Direct knowledge of yourself means not accepting other people's opinions about you. See for yourself what is there inside, what is hidden in your thoughts, in your passions, in your actions, in your hopes, in your desires. Look at these things directly, just as one looks at a new place after reaching one's destination. Look at yourself as one looks at an unfamiliar person, at a stranger. This will do you a lot of good. More than anything else it will shatter to pieces the graven image you have created of yourself in your mind. The shattering of

this idol has been smashed and you pass from the land of dreams into the land of reality.
Before we can become truthful and good, we must first dispel the illusions of truth and goodness that we have created to hide the untruth and evil in ourselves. These illusions were self-deceptions anyway. Nobody creates a fictitious image and personality for himself for nothing. It is done out of necessity. It is done in order to save oneself from humiliation in one's own eyes. When a man glimpses the animal that resides in him, the very presence of the animal torments him and he feels humiliated in himself. There are two ways to save yourself from this humiliation: either the animal has to disappear or you just have to forget about it. In order for it to disappear you must pass through a sadhana, a discipline. But it is very easy to forget the animal. It is a very simple thing. Imagination alone can do the trick. We create a false image of ourselves and with the help of this image the animal is suppressed. But it does not disappear. It becomes active behind this image. This image only has an outward appearance because at the back of it lies the animal. Don't you see that in real life this image is losing out, is being defeated every day? This is only natural. The animal inside is the real thing and so it defeats all our efforts. Every day the imaginary is defeated by it. Yet despite this, you keep your images alive and well cared for. And all the time you are busy trying to find ways to prove to others and to yourselves that they are real -- through your charities, your sacrifices, your acts of compassion and of service, through all of your so-called moral actions. Aren't all of these just looking for evidence? aren't these all just attempts to prove the images are real?

But all of this is to no avail. The image you have constructed of yourself is still dead. it will remain lifeless; there is no possibility that life will enter it.
I ask you to free yourselves from this dead weight. Let this false, dead companion go, and know and understand the one who is real. Setting up a false image will block the path, but observing the animal within you and freeing yourselves from this deception will show you the way.
Last night I passed a field where I saw mockups of men. Sticks had been put up and had been dressed in shirts. On the top, as heads, were earthen jars. In the darkness the birds and the animals took them to be watchmen and were frightened away. I looked at the scarecrows and also looked at the people with me. Then I said, "Let us look within ourselves to see if we too aren't scarecrows." At this my companions began to laugh. But I saw that their laughter was completely false.
Everything about us has become false -- our whole lives, our dealings, our laughter, our tears. Everything has become false. We are exhausted with the weight of this false hood. And although this falsehood is so heavy we do not throw it off because we are even more afraid of what lies behind the falsehood. We are afraid to go in there, for nowhere is the one we always thought of as ourselves to be found. On the contrary, the one whose presence we have always scorned in others will be found there in full bloom. Our fear does not allow us to discover our selves.
For one's sadhana, for self-realization, fearlessness is the first order of the day. The man who cannot dare isn't even able to go into himself. Far greater daring is needed to go into oneself than the daring required to walk along a lonely

rocky path on a dark night, because as soon as a man enters himself all the sweet dreams about himself he has cherished for so long are shattered and he finds himself face-to-face with the ugliest and most sordid of sins -- sins from which he thought he was totally free.

But when he who dares to discover himself moves into the dark lanes and valleys within himself, into places long abandoned, he finds that he has embarked upon a new life. With this daring plunge into the darkness he embarks on a journey which ultimately leads to the attainment of light -- the goal he has been seeking for many lives, the goal that always eluded him because he dared not walk into the darkness.

Darkness has enveloped and hidden the light just like a heap of ashes hides a spark of fire. As soon as we penetrate the darkness the light is seen. Therefore I say to you: if you want the light do not be afraid of the darkness. The man who is afraid of darkness will never find the light. The path to light passes through darkness. As a matter of fact, this daring entry into the darkness is itself transformed into the light within. Thanks to this daring, he who has been so far asleep, awakes.

I perceive that you don't want to attain self-knowledge but are afraid of yourself as you really are. You like to hear words like "sat-chit-anand -- being-consciousness-bliss", words like "eternal" and "pure". But this is because they help you forget what your really are -- the complete antithesis of sat-chit-anand.

But you want to feed your egos. And that is why sinners crowd around sadhus, because the talk they hear there is about the purity of the soul and about being one with

brahma and it's very pleasing to them. They feel sorry when they hear the sermons, the suppress their sense of inferiority and are then once again able to stand erect in front of themselves. They begin to feel it is quite easy and quite harmless to sin, since the soul is pure and is not affected by it! Believing that your soul is pure and untouched does not put an end to sin. It is only a very deep self-deception. It is the last trick of the human mind. By merely believing there is no darkness you do not have light. An ideology that teaches one to believe that sin does not exist and that the soul is not involved in sin is very dangerous. It is just a means of forgetting one's sinful condition. It does not lead to the extinct6ion of sin but to forgetting about sin. And forgetting about sin is worse than the existence of sin. Are you able to see your sins? Being aware of them is good, beneficial. But being unable to see them, being ignorant of them is harmful, because when they have been seen they begin to goad us, to prick at us to transform ourselves. Awareness of sin brings about change and the full consciousness of sin brings about instantaneous transformation.

Therefore please don't get involved in talk about the purity of the soul, enlightenment and so on. The soul has nothing to do with belief. It is something to be realized directly when the sin-ridden personality has been cast off and when the seeker, breaking through the layers of darkness, enters his own secret, innermost, center of light. It is a direct realization. It is not something that can be imagined. Any imaginary concept of it is probably going to be very harmful. I can become a hindrance and can stand in the way of attaining the light, because if you believe there is no

darkness, there is no question of your being able to remove something you do not believe exists. And if the soul commits neither good nor evil, then what is the point of rising above them? These meaningless statements and questions of our so-called philosophers have thrown many people into worlds of delusion. This poison has spread far and wide and because of it, we think of ourselves as God. And at the same time it would be difficult, on this earth, to find greater sinners than us!

Don't forget, also, that all this self-glorification and talk about the purity of the soul is really directed towards ignoring the existence of sin. It is very difficult for those who fall into the trap of this talk to get out of it later. It is easy to become free from sin but it is very difficult to escape the clutches of this dangerous kind of philosophy. The fact that the soul is pure is neither a theory nor a principle, it is a direct realization. And any discussion about it is useless. It is just like creating an illusion in the mind of a sick man that his sickness does not exist. If the sick man accepts this as gospel, the result won't be recovery but certain death.

Those who know do not discuss realization. They talk about the sadhana, the path that leads to realization. It is not the realization but the sadhana that should be considered. Realization is bound to follow the sadhana. It is useless to think about it. And if anyone takes realization for granted his sadhana will become impossible for him.

And yet look how easy it is to take realization-without-sadhana for granted! This way one begins to feel the joy of freedom from sin without actually being rid of it, and in the deep spell of illusion beggars begin to feel the joy of

emperors. What a joy it must be for beggars to be told they're emperors! It is no wonder that those who tell them so are respected and that they worship them by falling at their feet. There cannot be an easier and cheaper liberation from poverty and sin! This phony philosophy gives you a very easy freedom but sadhana requires great effort on your part.

I hope you are not caught int he trap of any philosophy or philosopher. I hope you have not resorted to any such short cut. The easiest and cheapest way is just to believe that the soul is pure and enlightened, that the soul is Brahma itself and that there is nothing to be done by you -- and of course, that whatever you happen to be doing at the time is the best thing because nothing needs to be given up.

Don't forget that even truth can be abused, and even the most noble truth can be used to hide the meanest ones. This has happened in the past and it happens every day. Cowardice can be hidden by non-violence, sin can be hidden under the philosophy of the purity and enlightenment of the soul, and no-action under the garb of sannyas.

I want to warn you against these dangers. If you aren't wary of them you cannot make much progress in the direction of the self. Don't seek shelter in any philosophical lean-to to try to get away from the sin and darkness that have enshrouded you. Know them. Become familiar with them. They are there. Don't forget they exist. Even though they are like dreams, they are still there. And don't think that dreams don't exist. Even a dream has an existence. It can also overwhelm us, disturb us. Saying "It was just a dream" leads nowhere. There is no other solution than waking up.

But if he likes, a man can even dream he has woken up. A false philosophy, a philosophy-without-sadhana does the very same thing. It does not awaken you, it simply causes a dream of awakening. This is a dream within a dream. Haven't you had dreams where you have seen yourself as awake?

Merely believing and saying that there is nos in, no darkness, serves no purpose. It is only an expression of your desire, not of the truth. it is our desire that there should be no sin, no darkness, but desiring alone is not enough. It is important. And gradually these philosophers begin to believe the dreams of accomplishment, just like a beggar who wants to be a king will ultimately start dreaming he has become one. They are always wishing for it and they finally imagine they have achieved what they wanted, but in actuality they have not achieved anything. And so it is easy to forget defeat. And they have a sigh of satisfaction in their sleep because they've achieved in a dream what they could not in reality.

I hope you are not seeking such satisfaction here. If so, you have come to the wrong person. I cannot give you any dreams. I cannot give you any basis for self-deception. I am a dream-breaker and I want to wake you from your slumber.

Awakening is painful, without a doubt, but it is the only penance. This penance, this pain, begins with your awareness of your actual sinful condition, of the reality of the sorry state of the self. You are unable to harbor any more illusions. You know what reality is, as it is. This will cause unhappiness and this will cause pain because it will destroy the sweet dreams in which you see yourselves as

emperors. The emperor will disappear and the beggar will stand in the light; beauty will vanish and ugliness will appear; good will evaporate and evil will materialize; the animal in you will stand before you in all his nakedness. This is all necessary, very necessary. It is imperative to pass through this agony. It is inevitable because it is the travail of childbirth. And it is only after this, after we have seen the animal face-to-face, that we will begin to know clearly the one who is not the animal.

A man who sees the animal face-to-face becomes different from the animal. This recognition of the animal within breaks his identification with it. The observation separates the observer from the observed. And then the seed of awakening is sown, which when fully developed, flowers into self-realization.

Running away from sin, from darkness and from the animal is not sadhana but an escape from it. It is an escape from reality. It is like the ostrich hiding its head in the sand and feeling secure in the thought that since it cannot see the enemy, the enemy does not exist. How nice it would be if this were true! But it isn't. Not seeing an enemy doesn't mean he does not exist. On the contrary, he becomes more dangerous that way. You will be an easier prey with your eyes closed. In the presence of an enemy our eyes should be open all the wider, since knowledge of the enemy is in our interest.

Ignorance can do us nothing but harm. It is for this reason I ask you to discover your dark side fully and to observe it. Take off all your clothes and see what you are. Set aside all your principles and theories and see what you are. Lift your head out of the sand and look.

The very opening of your eyes, this very looking is a transformation, the beginning of a new life. With the opening of your eyes a change begins and whatsoever you do thereafter takes you towards the truth. Breaking through the layers of darkness, you walk into the light; sweeping away the webs of sin, you attain god; striking the fatal blow at ignorance, you reach the soul.

This is the right path for one's sadhana, for one's journey to self-realization. And before this no dreams need be dreamed -- no dreams about the soul and God, no dreams about sat-chit-anand and brahma. This is like living in a fool's paradise while the real paradise is being lost. You too can reach that state of perfection, sat-chit-anand, by the path of action, by karma, by dispelling ignorance and darkness.

Last night someone asked me what satsang was. I answered that satsang meant the company of one's self, of the truth, and that the truth was not to be found outside. Neither guru, nor teachers, nor shastras can give it to you. It is inside you and if you wish to attain it, seek your own company. Be with yourself. But we are always in the company of someone or other, and never at all on our own.

Eckhart was once sitting all alone under a grove of trees in a lonely field. A friend who was passing by saw him sitting there. He went up to him and said, "I saw you sitting all alone and I thought I would keep you company and so I have come over to join you." do you know what Eckhart replied? He said, "I was with myself, but you have come and now I am all alone."

Are you ever in your own company like this? This is satsang. This is prayer. This is meditation. When I am all

alone within myself and when there is no thought, no thought of anyone, I am in the company of my self. When the outer world is absent, inside there is the company of one's self. In that companionlessness and solitude, in your pure being the truth is realized because in your innermost being you yourself are that truth.

It is therefore a question of being religious, not of appearing religious. Whenever anyone asks me about being religious the first question I ask him is, "do you want to appear religious or to become religious?" The two paths are quite different. Being religious is a sadhana, a process of self-realization; appearing religious is just self-adornment. The garbs of the sadhus and saints, their stereotyped, conventional robes, their books, the marks on their foreheads and on their bodies -- all these are for appearing religious. If you too want to appear religious like this it is very easy.

But remember, appearing is for others, becoming is for oneself. I am not as others know me from the outside. I am that which I know myself to be from the inside. If I appear to you to be in tune with myself, self-composed, does it hold any value for you? In reality, the value only has to do with my own being.

Religious qualities can also be worn, like religious clothes. People wear them like ornaments for decoration. And this is all the more dangerous. Man's behavior can be of two kinds, like genuine flowers or like paper flowers. The first come from the very life and sap of the plant; the others have no life in them. They don't bloom into flowers and their petals have to be pasted together.

When we have a fever and the body is running a temperature, we don't try to get rid of the fever by bringing down the temperature. We try to reduce the fever and this brings the temperature back to normal. Temperature is nothing but a symptom of the fever, not a disease in itself. It is only an indication, it is not the enemy. What would you call a doctor who began to battle with temperature? This same lack of sanity can be found in religious life. Outward indications are mistaken for the enemy and, taking the symptoms for the disease, we begin to fight. This does not help to eliminate the disease. One the contrary it is the patient, the diseased, who will surely be eliminated. Egoism, untruth, violence, lust, greed, passion are all indications, all symptoms. They are the temperature. They are not the diseases. Our fight is not to be directed against them but through them we need only learn there is a culprit within. This culprit is ignorance of th self. It is this ignorance of the self that is expressed in a variety of ways, like egoism, lust, fear, anger, violence, lies and so on. And since these are mere indication, just expressions, they cannot be done away with by striking at them.

Then what do we have to do? Do we have to try to hide them by exhibiting the artificial flowers of truth, non-violence, benevolence, bravery? You as well must have decorated yourselves with such flowers at some point. Beware. Be sure you are not deceived by them, even though you may have succeeded in misleading others. The question is not to get rid of untruth, violence and fear, but to rise above this ignorance of the self. They are all there because of this ignorance. Without it they cannot exist. If there is no ignorance of the self all these will

automatically disappear and their places will as automatically be taken by truth, humility, desirelessness, freedom from anger, non-violence, non-possessiveness. They too are signs. They are indications of self knowledge.

The Perfect Way

Chapter #6

Chapter title: The Third Morning
6 June 1964 am

I am unable to give you the truth. If anyone says he is capable of giving it to you, you can be certain he has begun by giving you an untruth. No one has the capacity to give the truth. This is no comment on the capacity of the giver, it only shows that truth is a living thing. It is not an inanimate object that can be given or taken away. It is a living experience one must obtain by oneself.
Dead objects can be transferred from one person to another, but not experiences. Can I transfer to you the love, the experience of love that I have had? Can I give you the beauty and the music I have encountered? How I wish I could give you the joy I have experienced in such an extraordinary way in this ordinary-looking body of mine! But there is not way to do so. I feel restless and tormented about it but I can do nothing. This is such helplessness!
A friend of mine was born blind. How I wished I could transfer my sight to him but it wasn't possible. Perhaps one day it may be possible because eyes are parts of the body and may be capable of being transplanted. But the sight that

sees the truth can never be transferred no matter how strongly one might wish it. It belongs to the soul, not to the body.

Whatever is achieved in the world of the self is only achieved through self-effort. In the world of the soul, no debt, no borrowing, no depending on others is possible. Nobody can walk there on borrowed legs. There is no refuge there apart from one's self. To attain to truth you must be your own refuge. This is the inescapable condition. It is because of this that I said I am incapable of giving you the truth. Only words can be communicated, words that are lifeless and dead -- and the truth always remains behind. And this communication of words is not real communicating at all. That which is alive -- their meaning, their soul, the experience that is their essence -- does not go with them. They are like empty cartridges, like bullets without gunpowder. They are like dead bodies, corpses. They can only be a burden to you; they can never liberate you. With words you only carry the corpse of truth. There is no heartbeat of truth in a corpse.

As I said, truth cannot be given. But I can be of some assistance in helping you set down this load you are carrying on your back. It is a burden you have been carrying for ages and it has become very heavy, unbearable. You must be freed from this burden of words. Just as a traveler becomes covered with dust while walking along the road it is natural that the dust of words and thoughts gathers on one during the journey through life. But you have to brush this dust off.

Words are dead things; they are not the truth. Nobody's words are the truth. Do not collect them. Collecting them is

harmful. The pilgrimage to truth cannot be made carrying this weight. Just as a climber must lay down his pack before scaling a mountain to seek the heights, one who has embarked on the journey to truth had better lay down the burden of words. Only a consciousness free of words is able to attain the lofty heights of truth.

I teach only one kind of non-possessiveness, the non-possession of words and thought. Their dead weight is making your journey very difficult. Chuang Tzu has said, "The net is for catching fish. Catch the fish and throw away the net." But we are such bad fishermen that we have become entangled in the nets and have forgotten about the fish. Look on your heads. You are carrying boats on your heads nad you have forgotten you are to sail in them.

Words are symbols. They are sign-pointers. They themselves are not the truth. Understand the significance of the signs and then throw them away. Collecting signs is no different from collecting corpses.

Words are like fingers pointing to the moon. A man who concentrates all his attention on the fingers misses the moon. The fingers serve their purpose if they lead you away from them. But on the contrary, they draw you to themselves, then they become not only useless but truly harmful.

Haven't the words you have learned about truth become a source of misfortune to you already? Have they not separated you from one another, man from man? Aren't all the stupidities and cruelties perpetrated in the name of religion because of words? Aren't all those sects known as the various religions just based on the differences of words?

Truth is one and can only be one, but words are many, just like the moon is one while the fingers pointing to her may be a thousand and one. Those who have held on to one or more of the countless words that point to the truth are responsible for the many religious sects. These religions have not arisen from truth but from words. Truth is one. Religion too is one. Those who discard words attain to this religion alone and to this truth alone. It is without equal. Therefore I don't want to add to your burden of words by more talk. You are already breaking down under this heavy load of words. I see clearly that your necks are bent under their weight.

Those who have known the truth do not open their mouths at all. Their lips are sealed. Not a word is to be heard from them. Aren't they saying enough this way? Aren't they suggesting that truth lies in silence, that silence itself is truth? But we are unable to understand their language. We cannot understand anything without words. Our understanding is limited to words and so they speak to us through the medium of words. They tell us in words about that which cannot be communicated in words. It is their compassion that leads them to attempt this impossible feat, and because of our ignorance we try to catch hold of their every word. Words coupled with ignorance form a sect -- and once again we are deprived of truth and true religion is as distant from us as ever.

You must rise above words. Only then will you know what is behind the words. Words only fill our memories. Knowledge does not come from them. And please don't mistake memory for knowledge. Know once and for all that

memory is nothing more than a record of the past. It is learning, not knowledge.

Someone asked Ramana Maharshi what he should do to know the truth. He replied, "Forget everything that you know." If only you could forget all you know! Out of this forgetting would emerge the innocence and simplicity in which the truth and the self are known.

When words and thoughts formed out of words do not crowd your consciousness light finds and entry at that free moment. It shines through and you attain to knowledge. You have to open the windows and doors of consciousness. And the walls now surrounding the consciousness have to be pulled down as well. Then you will encounter the light that is your true nature. In truth, to meet the sky one has to become like the sky -- empty, free, boundless. Thoughts do not allow this to happen. They surround you like clouds. These clouds must be dispersed. How can I then spread more clouds of thought over your mind?

What I am telling you, what I want to tell you but am unable to do is not a thought or an idea as such -- it is an experience, a direct realization. Were it simply a thought I wanted to communicate I could have communicated it to you -- and had the experience been of the outside world, some word or other would have communicated it. But this experience is not of the outside world. It is the experience of one who experiences everything. It is the knowledge of the knower. And there lies the difficulty.

In accepted knowledge, the knower and the known are separate, the seer and the seen are distinct, but in the realization of the self they are not separate. There, the knower, the known and knowledge are all one. And so

here, words become quite useless. They are not meant to be used in this context. To use them like this is to stretch them beyond their capacity, beyond their potentiality. No wonder they become crippled and lifeless in this tug-of-war. And although they give an indication of the body, of the outer form of truth, they cannot touch the heart of truth. The truth will be known only when words are not present.

How can words express the truth? That which is attained in a state of thoughtlessness cannot be held earthbound by thought. Is there a way to tie down the sky? and can we call it the sky if it can be tied down? But why don't we think of truth in this way? Is truth any less boundless or infinite than the sky?

If the sky were packed in bundles and put on sale in the market nobody would come forward to buy. But we do try to purchase truth! Truth, God amd moksha are all on sale in the market. And the vendors are not to blame. They only supply the demands of the buyers. And as long as there are buyers, as long as there are customers for truth it won't be possible to close down the shops that offer ready-made truth. All the organizations and all the sects operated in the name of religion have turned into shops. you buy ready-made truth in them. Not only are ready-made clothes available in the market, ready-made truth is also on sale there. I cannot give you ready-made truth. Ready-made truth simply does not exist.

I remember a story. A guru, a teacher, once asked a disciple a question about truth. The latter replied and the guru said, "Yes, that is right." The next day the guru asked the same question. The disciple said he had already replied to it on the previous day. The guru asked him to answer once again.

The disciple repeated what he had said the previous day, whereupon the guru said, "No! No!" The disciple was surprised and said to his guru, "Yesterday you said 'Yes, that is right', so how is it you say 'no' today?" do you know what the guru answered? He said, "Yesterday it was 'yes', today it is 'no'."

What is the point of this story? do you get it? The point is that the disciple's answer had become stereotyped, it was imprisoned in a fixed pattern. It had lost its life; it was dead. It had become a part of the memory. it was no9t knowledge. Our memories are full f such dead answers and that which lives cannot surface because of all the corpses. My friends, you have to awaken experience, not memory. Memory is a dead weight; experience is living liberation. It is impossible to conceive the experience of truth beforehand. Truth cannot be imprisoned by any terminology or by any rigid definition perpetrated by some philosophy, religion or ideology. We must not expect the truth to conform to any ideology or to any school of thought. Any effort to confine it to any pattern will be futile.

It is not that we have to imprison truth, but on the contrary, that we have to liberate ourselves. The way to truth is not to confine it, the way is to discover ourselves. Do not imprison truth; unshackle yourself. This is the only way to attain. The realization of truth is only possible through experience. It cannot be known by any other means than self-realization or self-experience. Experience and experience alone is the deciding factor.

Once I was by a waterfall. I drank its water and found it to be sweet. This also applies to truth. Drink and know. It has a kind of taste you can only know by drinking it.

Truth is not a product of your knowledge. It is not one of your creations. You do not manufacture it. Nobody does; nobody can. It is already there. You can't buy it anywhere, it is already there. The moment you open your eyes it becomes visible; the moment you shut them it becomes invisible. It is just like light. You don't have to buy it. You just have to open your eyes and then the truth emerges in all its innocence, in its perfect purity, in the fulness of its being -- and it transforms you. For this to be possible it is essential you do not deform yourself with worn-out and borrowed thoughts and that you do not accept the leftovers of others. You must know that life has no room for stale or dead things.

What then shall I say to you? I shall not speak about truth. Then what shall I speak about? I shall speak to you about how truth may be known. I shall not speak to you about light but will tell you how you can open your eyes and see the light. I won't say what I am seeing but I will say how I am seeing it. That alone can be told. And it is to your great good fortune that at least this much can be said without harmful effects.

Religion, true religion, does not concern itself with the doctrine of truth, but rather with the method of knowing truth. Therefore I shall not say anything about truth. I do not want to unveil it before you see it yourself. I wish to take you to the place where you can know it yourself, to the point where you can have a look at it, to that boiling point

where your ignorance will evaporate and you will encounter the flame of the fire that is your self.

Now let us talk about that process. Those who aspire to walk along the path to truth find two doors open to them: one of them is thinking about truth; the other, following a sadhana for attainment of truth. One is the path of logic; the other, of yoga. One is the way of contemplation of the truth; the other, the way of discipline leading to its attainment. But in my view, there is only one door. To me the other does not exist, it simply appears to. This other door is just an illusion.

The path of thinking about truth is not a real path. It is a false and illusory door and because of it many get lost. Through the door of thought, by thinking about truth, you will never get anywhere. This way leads you astray without a doubt, but it does not take you anywhere either, not to any destination as such. Even after walking along this path for a very long time you will find you are standing int he very same place at which you started. It is only a beginning; there is no end to it. And the beginning of a walk that has no end can only be a dream.

Thinking about the truth, what will you do? How will you think about the truth? You cannot think about something that is not known. How will a thought think about the unknown? Its scope is only in the realm of the known. Thinking can pose problems, it cannot solve them. Anyone who pursues thinking will find himself lost in chaos and his mind will end up in a kind of madness. That many a thinker went crazy is no accident. This is the culmination of thinking, its ultimate destination. The way of thinking is not a way to attain truth at all.

Shall I tell you a story, a wonderful story?
Once upon a time a man set out in search of the end of the world. After a long journey, after an almost endless pilgrimage he arrived at a temple where the words "This is the end of the world" were written. He was very surprised and couldn't believe what he saw there. He continued on and within a short time reached the place where the world came to an end. A deep abyss lay before him, fathomless, empty. He looked down into it. There was absolutely nothing there. His breath came in gasps and his head began to reel. He turned and ran. And never again did he return to look at the abyss.
This is a story about the end of thinking. If we think about the truth we will continue thinking and thinking and thinking and we will reach a point where further thinking becomes impossible. This is the end of thinking. There will be a space, an abysmally deep emptiness in front of us and our minds will refuse to take one more step.
Such a moment comes in the process of thought if we carry thinking through to the end. It is inevitable. And if you still feel there is something more to think about, take it from me that you have not yet reached the end. When there is nothing more to think about, absolutely nothing, and no further step is possible, know that the end is real, that you have arrived at the temple where the world ends.
If the man who reached the end fo the world had asked me what to do, can you imagine what advice I would have given him? I would not have advised him to run away. I would have told him that since he had journeyed so far it would be better to take one more step, the last and the most important step. I would have asked him to jump boldly into

the abyss, into the empty space, into the void before him. I would have told him that only this one last step was necessary, and I would have asked him to keep in mind that where the world ends the kingdom of God begins.

There is no point more important than the point where the world ends because it is the point where the realm of god begins. The vision of God begins when thinking comes to an end. Where thinking ends truth is realized. You have to let thought go and jump into thoughtlessness. From words you must jump into the void, into emptiness. This is the way. This is bravery. This is penance. This is sadhana.

If at this point you see a vision of Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesha, be aware that you are still thinking. if you see Mahavira, Buddha or Krishna, be aware that you are still dreaming dreams. Then you have not reached the real end. The true end is the one where there is nothing to be thought of, nothing to be seen, nothing to be known. Only your emptiness remains. In fact, you are not there either. Only the void, nothingness, is there.

You are standing at the end of the world. Your mind will want to go back. it will want to do so with all its might. At this moment courage is needed and you have to take one more step. One more step, one jump is enough. And everything is transformed. Then there is no more thinking. Then there is realization. And then you know.

You know when you drop all knowing; you see when you give up all looking. And when you cease to be in every way, then for the first time you really are. Sadhana is a jump into the valley of death. But that is the only way to realize immortality. it is not thinking, but a jump out of thinking that is necessary. And that jump out of thinking is

meditation. Every day I say this very thing. Thoughts are the waves on the ocean of consciousness. They are like transient bubbles, disappearing almost before they are formed. They indicate a troubled and agitated surface, but what is to be found in them is not to be found in the depths below. Staying with the bubbles and the waves is remaining in shallow water. All thoughts are shallow. No thought can be deep, just as there cannot be waves in the depths of the sea. Waves are possible only on the surface and thoughts too are just the play on the surface of consciousness. The ocean is not in the waves, the waves are in the ocean. There cannot be any waves without an ocean but there can be an ocean without waves. There cannot be any thoughts without consciousness but there can be consciousness without thoughts.

Consciousness is the source, the spring. If you wish to know it you must go beyond the waves. You must transcend the waves. You can't just keep sitting on the seashore. Kabir has said, "I went in search, but foolishly kept sitting on the shore." Please don't sit on the shore like Kabir. You have to go beyond the shore. The shore is only there so you can jump into the sea.

And it is also possible that a man may not remain standing on the shore but will remain floating on the waves. In my view, this is the shore as well. Whatever stops you from diving in and drowning is the shore. People swimming in thought are like this. They are under the illusion they have left the shore but in actual fact they haven't. To fathom the sea they also have to leave the waves behind.

When Mahavira passed away, he left a message for his beloved disciple Gautama who was absent at the time. He

said, "Tell Gautama that he has crossed the river quite nicely, but ask him why he is now holding fast to the shore. Tell him to leave that behind as well." To what shore was Mahavira referring? I am also speaking fo the same shore. It is the shore of thinking; it is the shore of one who is swimming in thoughts.
Truth is attained by diving, not by swimming. Swimming happens on the surface; diving takes you to the unfathomable depths. You have to plunge from the shore of thoughts into the depths of the void. There is a lovely couplet from Bihar: "Those half-drowned got fully-drowned; those fully-drowned crossed the ocean."
What do you intend to do then? If you want to cross the ocean, then the courage to drown yourself is an absolute necessity. I teach you the very act of drowning yourself so that you can cross the ocean, so that you can be what you really are.

The Perfect Way

Chapter #7

Chapter title: The third Evening
6 June 1964 pm

Question 1
THE FIRST QUESTION: ACCORDING TO YOU, NOBODY IS ABLE TO IMPART THE TRUTH. IS WHAT YOU SAY NOT TRUE THEN?

What I am telling you is only an indication and should not be regarded as true in itself. Truth is far removed from indication. It is not the indicator you have to see, but where it directs you. While you are looking in that direction what you will perceive is the truth. There is no way to speak that truth. No sooner has it been uttered than it becomes false. The truth can never be expressed; however, it can become one's experience.

Question 2
THE SECOND QUESTION: YOU SUGGEST THAT WE BECOME FULLY-MERGED, THAT WE DROWN. HOW CAN WE DO THIS?

I tell you from my own experience that there is no easier path than merging with one's own self. The only thing one has to do is stop seeking for the support of anything on the surface of the mind. By catching hold of thoughts you cannot drown and because of their support you remain on the surface.
We are in the habit of catching hold of thoughts. As soon as one thought passes on we catch hold of another -- but we never enter the gap between two successive thoughts. This gap itself is the channel to drowning in the depths. Do not move in thoughts -- go deep down between them in the gaps.
How can this be done? It can be done by awareness, by observing the stream of thoughts. Just as a man standing on the side of a road watches the people passing by, you should observe your thoughts. They are simply pedestrians, passing by on the road of the mind within you. Just watch

them. Don't form judgment about any of them. If you can observe them with detachment, the fist that has been gripping them opens automatically and you will find yourself standing, not in thoughts, but in the interval, in the gap between them. But the gap has no foundation so it isn't possible just to stand there. Simply by being there you drown.
And this drowning itself is the real support because it is through this that you reach the being you really are. One who seeks support in the realm of thoughts is really suspended in the air without support -- but he who throws away all crutches attains the support of his own self.

Question 3
THE THIRD QUESTION: I WANT TO CONQUER MY MIND BUT IT SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE. YET YOU SAY IT IS VERY EASY. HOW DO I DO IT?

In the very idea of conquest I see the seed of the impossibility of conquest. And it is this very thing that does not allow man to conquer anything. If you want to conquer your own shadow will you be able to? As soon as you know the shadow to be a shadow you have won it over. The shadow isn't to be conquered, it is just to be known. And what is true of the shadow is also true of the mind. I ask you to know the mind, not to conquer it.
Someone once said to Buddha, "My mind is very restless. Will you please show me the way to calm it?" Buddha posed a question in reply: "Where is your mind? Bring it to me and I will calm it." The man said, "That is the difficulty. It eludes all my attempts to catch it."

If I had been in Buddha's place I would have said, "Do not try to catch it, let it go. Your very desire to catch it6 is its restlessness. Can you ever catch a shadow?"
Do you know what else Buddha said? He said, "Look at me. I have calmed it have I not?"
If you can only watch your mind and not try to catch it or to conquer it you will find it is no more to be found. In the old days they used to ask, when they were trying to saddle-break a horse, whether it was better to tire the horse out or to tighten the reins. There were also these two methods for conquering the mind, for bringing it under control. But I would not prescribe either of these two methods.
In the first place, I would ask you to see if there really is a horse at all. You are out to exhaust, harness and saddle something that does not exist at all. Both efforts are useless because there is no horse. The horse is the shadow of your ignorance. When you awaken, there is neither horse nor mind to conquer, neither horse nor mind to bring under control.

Question 4
THE FOURTH QUESTION: YOU ALSO ASK US NOT TO HOLD ON TO THOUGHTS. DOES THIS APPLY TO GOOD THOUGHTS AS WELL?

If you want to know your real being you must rid yourself of both good and evil and become empty, without content. Thoughts, both of good and of evil, are all acquired things. They come from outside: they pour in from the outside. Your real being is hidden under there, under this load of

chains. It is necessary to break these chains. It makes no difference whether the chains are of iron or of gold. Whatsoever comes from without is an acquired thing, an acquisition -- but inside us there is a state of pure consciousness where no outside impressions can enter. The soul comes into its own only in the absence of all one's outer trappings, of all one's outer conditionings. To discover your soul you must have an unconditioned mind. But we are full of thoughts and those who are religious are even fuller, always adding to the pile with thoughts about religion. And this is what is understood by "being religious"! Being full of the scriptures is considered being religious. This is absolutely wrong.

A teacher once said to one of his learned disciples, "Everything else is fine, but there is still one defect in you." The disciple thought about it for a long time but was unable to find any defect in his behavior so he asked the teacher about it. The teacher replied, "You have altogether too much religion in you. This is the only defect that remains in you but it is by no means insignificant."

How can there be too much religion? There can be too many religious scriptures, too much religious thought and the mind becomes so burdened that it cannot fly off into the sky of truth.

I ask you to be empty. Rid yourself completely of all thoughts, of all impressions and then see what happens in that emptiness. The greatest miracle of life takes place in that emptiness, in that void. The void brings you face-to-face with your self. There is no greater miracle than this! As soon as you stand face-to-face with yourself you stand face-to-face with God.

Question 5
THE FIRST QUESTION: I AM AN IDOL-WORSHIPPER, BUT FROM YOUR POINT OF VIEW THERE SEEMS TO BE NO NEED FOR AN IDOL. WOULD YOU ADVISE ME TO GIVE IT UP?

I do not ask you to give up anything or to take on anything. I am simply calling to you to wake up. If when you wake up, your dreams are over, it will be another story. Behavior changes along with levels of consciousness. When children grow up they automatically stop playing with dolls. They don't make any effort to give it up, it stops automatically. There once lived a sadhu on the outskirts of a village. He lived alone in a hut without doors. There was nothing in the house that made doors necessary. One day some soldiers happened by. They went into the hut and asked for water. One of them asked the sadhu why, since he was a sadhu, there wasn't a single idol of God anywhere in the hut. The sadhu replied, "The hut is very small. Do you see room for two?"
The soldiers were amused at the sadhu's words, and the next day they brought him a statue of God as a gift. But the sadhu said, "I don't need any image of God because he himself has been living here for a long time. And 'I' have been lost. Don't you see there isn't room for two here?" The soldiers saw he was pointing to his heart. That was his hut. God is formless. And so, his presence is formless; it has no shape. Consciousness cannot have shape either. It is boundless. It is beginningless and endless because that which just is, has neither beginning nor end.

How foolish we are, making these images. We worship idols we have made of ourselves. Man has created an image of God based on his own for4m and so, in this way, he ends up worshipping himself. This is the height of self-deception, egoism and ignorance.

God is not to be worshipped. God is to be lived. You have to install God in your life and not in the temple. You have to make every possible effort to allow god to come into your heart and to be in your every breath. For this, the disappearance of the "I" is essential. At present that "I" occupies your heart and pervades every moment of your life. And as long as that "I" is within you it is impossible for God to enter. In one of his songs Kabir has said that the lane of love was very narrow and that it was impossible for two to walk along it at the same time.

One night I read until very late by the light of a lamp. When I turned off the lamp I was amazed. The full moon was shining outside but the light of my tiny lamp had prevented the moonlight from entering my room. No sooner was my lamp extinguished than the nectar of the moon permeated my room. That day I cam to realize that as long as the light of "I" shone within me, the light of God had to wait outside.

The extinction of "I", nirvana, samadhi, are all terms for the coming of God. They are synonymous. Therefore please don't construct any images of God, just destroy the image of "I". Its very absence will be the presence of God.

How easy it is then to realize truth! But things that appear easy and simple are always found to be difficult. That is so because whatever is easy and simple is quickly forgotten for the same reason. We remain occupied by things that are

far away and lose sight of the things that are near. We remain occupied with the other and forget the one that is our self.

Doesn't it often happen in the theater that the audience becomes so involved in the play going on in front of them that they forget themselves? This happens in life too. Life is also a giant stage and we have become so engrossed in what is being acted out on the stage that we have forgotten the audience, the seer, the self. In order to attain truth, to attain yourself, you only have to do one thing -- you only have to wake up, to realize you are at a play and nothing else.

I see that you are always encircled by a kind of restlessness that is expressed in your behavior whether you are sitting, standing, walking or sleeping. It is there in every action, great or small. Don't you feel it yourself? Have you never noticed that whatsoever you do, you do it with a restless mind?

You have to bring a halt to this barrage of restlessness and create a zone of silence. Only against a background of silence will you be able to experience the joy and the music that are ever-present in you -- but you are unable to hear it and to live in it because of the uproar and turmoil within yourselves. My friends, the outer turmoil is no disturbance at all. If you are at peace within it is as if the outer turmoil is not. But we are restless within ourselves. And this is the only difficulty.

Someone asked me this morning, "What should we do to have peace within?" I said, "look at the flowers. Look how they open. Look at the streams. Look at how they flow."

Do you see any restlessness there? How peacefully it all goes on! There is no restlessness anywhere except in man. You can live like the flowers too. Live like this and experience yourself as part of nature. The belief of the "I", that it is separate, has created all this restlessness and tension. Rid yourself completely of the "I" before you act, before you do anything. Then you will find divine peace spreading throughout you.

When the wind is blowing be as if you are the wind and when it rains feel that you are the rain too and then see how profound the peace gradually becomes. With the sky be the sky, with darkness be darkness and with light be light. Do not keep aloof. Let the drop that you are fall into the ocean. And then you will know that which is beauty, music and truth.

If I walk I must be conscious that I am walking; if I stand up I must be conscious that I am standing up. No act of the body or of the mind should occur in unconsciousness, in a half-sleep. If in this way you awaken and live your life with awareness, your mind will become pure, faultless, transparent.

Through such aware living and behavior, meditation pervades each activity of one's life. Its inner flow accompanies us night and day. It calms us. It purifies our actions and makes us men of virtue. Bear in mind that a man who is awake and aware in his ever action, physical or mental, can do no wrong to others. Evil deeds can only be committed in unconsciousness, in a state of delusion. They can very easily be avoided in a wakeful and conscious state.

I call samadhi, the culmination of meditation, "the great death", and in fact that is what it is. Through ordinary death you will die -- but you will be reborn because with that death your self will not cease to be. The self will take a new birth and pass through yet another death. Ordinary death is not a real death because it is followed by rebirth, and this is again followed by death. And this cycle continues on and on until samadhi, until the great death comes and frees us from the cycle of births and deaths.

Samadhi is the great death, for it is in samadhi that the "I" ceases to be, and along with it the cycle of births and deaths ceases to be as well. What remains then is life. Through the great death of samadhi one attains life immortal, where there is neither birth nor death. Immortality has neither beginning nor end. It is this great death we call moksha, emancipation, nirvana, brahma.

I also ask that you consider dhyana, meditation, as rest and not as activity. "No-action" means this very thing. It is perfect rest, a total halt to all actions. And when all the actions have been reduced to nothingness and the pulsations of the mind have become still, then in that restful state something begins to emerge that cannot be taught by all the religions of the world put together. Only when there are no actions can that which is no-action, that which is the center and the life of all actions, be seen. Only then can the doer be seen.

Sarahapada has said, "O mind, go and rest -- somewhere where the sun and the moon do not reach and where even the air does not dare to enter." Such a place is within you and nobody but you can enter. That is your atman, your soul.

Your body on the other hand extends to a point where others do have access. The limit of the world's entry into you is the boundary of your body. The world can enter it because it is a part of the world, of samsara. The senses are the doors through which the world enters. The mind is a hodgepodge of impressions that have entered you like this. That which is beyond the body, beyond the mind and the senses is the soul, atman. Without attaining that soul life is useless, because without knowing and attaining it all knowledge and achievements are worthless.

I do not consider samsara and nirvana, the world and emancipation, as two different things. The distinction that exists between them has nothing to do with their natures. it is not an objective distinction. The distinction is not between them, it is in your way of looking at them. Samsara and nirvana are not two different entities. Samsara and nirvana are your two ways of looking at the one reality. The reality is only one but the ways of looking at it are two. Seen from the standpoint of knowledge it appears to be one thing; seen from the standpoint of ignorance, another. What appears as samsara in ignorance becomes nirvana in knowledge. What is ignorance in the world is knowledge in God. Therefore the question is how to change the internal world, not the external one. If you change, everything else changes. You are both samsara and nirvana.

The truth cannot be had at any price. It cannot be obtained from others in exchange for something. it is the fruit of self-development.

Emperor Bimbasara once went to Mahavira and said, "I want to attain truth. I am willing to give anything I possess but I must have the truth that rids man of all sorrow."

Mahavira saw that the ruler wanted to conquer truth in the same way he had conquered the world, that he even wanted to buy the truth. So understanding that it was ego that spoke, Mahavira said to Bimbasara, "Excellency, first go to Punya shravak, a citizen of your empire, and get from him the fruit of his meditation. That will make your journey to emancipation and truth easier."

Bimbasara went to Punya Shravak and said, I have come to ask something. I want to buy the fruit of your meditation. I will pay whatever price you require."

On hearing the emperor's request, Punya shravak replied, "My Lord, meditation means serenity. It means keeping the mind free from temptation and hatred and remaining steady in one's self. How can this be given by one person to another? You want to buy it but this is impossible. You will have to acquire it yourself."

There is no other way. The truth cannot be purchased. It can neither be obtained as a gift nor by begging. And it cannot be conquered by attack. Attacking truth is not the way to attain it. Violence is an expression of ego and where the ego is truth cannot exist. To attain truth you have to reduce yourself to zero. Truth comes through the door of the void, of emptiness. It doesn't come through the attack of the ego but through sensitivity and the receptivity of emptiness. Don't attack truth -- prepare an opening in yourself for it to come in.

Hui-neng said that there was a way to attain truth: cultivation through no-cultivation. No-cultivation is laid down as a condition in order to avoid the use of force in cultivation. This is inaction, this no-cultivation. It is not attaining but emptying -- but it is the way to attain truth.

The extent to which you empty yourself is the extent to which you attain.
Where does rainwater go? It doesn't stay on the hills but runs into the empty ditches. The nature of truth is similar to the nature of water. If you want to attain truth empty yourself completely. As soon as you are empty the truth will fill that empty place with itself.
Truth is within you. It is within me. You don't have to go anywhere else to look for it. You just have to dig it out of yourselves as you dig wells for water. You have to dig the well of the soul. And meditation is the spade for digging that well. With the spade of meditation we must dig out the earth of the outside world that covers our nature -- and then the one we are seeking is near. He is hidden in the seeker himself.

The Perfect Way

Chapter #8

Chapter title: The Fourth Morning
7 June 1964 am

I am indeed very happy to see all of you! I can feel the depth of your desire, of your thirst to know the truth. I see it in your eyes and feel it in every breath you take. And as your hearts throb for the attainment of truth my heart throbs as well! I am deeply touched by your thirst for knowledge. It is such a delight! It is so beautiful! There is nothing sweeter or more beautiful on earth than the desire to know the truth.

In this moment of joy what shall I say to you? What shall I say to you in this moment of your quest, as you await my words? It is only in moments like this that we realize how insignificant and obscure words are -- just how meaningless and powerless they really are. When there is nothing particularly worth saying they are able to convey it; when there is something profound to say they are miserably inadequate. This is only natural because the realization of truth, the experience of bliss and the vision of beauty are so subtle and ethereal that no earthly form can be attributed to them. And as soon as one attempts to ascribe a form to them the experiences become dead and meaningless, and then the living experience does not come into our hands alive, it is its corpse that comes. The spirit is left behind and whatever the words refer to is no longer true.

Then what should I say? Would it have been better not to have said anything, for you not to have heard anything at all? How nice it would have been if we had remained calm and quiet, speechless and silent, and it you could have awakened and seen something in that silence, something that truly is. In that case I would have saved myself from speaking and you from listening and yet the truth would have been conveyed because the eternal truth is within everyone. The music you are searching for resounds and every moment in the depths of your being, and the moments when you are searching for truth, even if they are silent, are transformed into prayer. Both thirsting for god and waiting silently are prayers.

What man is seeking is within his own self. What you have gathered here to ask me about and to know from me is always within you. You have never lost it. Nor can you

ever lose it. It is your existence, your being. I is the one treasure that can never be lost because you yourself are that treasure. But we are all looking for it, searching for the very thing that can never be lost. What a contradiction in terms!

I remember a wonderful sermon but I do not recall when or by whom it was given.

One evening there was to be a very big gathering in a temple and so a large number of monks had assembled. After a long wait the speaker arrived. As he stood up to speak someone in the audience asked a question, "What is truth?" An alert and expectant silence filled the room. It was known that the speaker knew the answer and consequently every one of his words was considered to be important. But do you know what he said? He said, and very loudly, "O monks!" The silence resounded with the two words and every eye was on him. All were silent, watchful. But the speaker spoke no more. His speech was over; he had finished his sermon.

Do you understand what he said? Had he said anything? In my view he had said everything. Whatsoever was worth saying had been covered by his two words. I too want to say the same thing. I will say the same thing. It is the only thing that deserves to be said, that something words cannot convey.

Then what did he say? He said, "Don't look for truth anywhere outside. Ask nobody about it. If it exists at all, it exists in you. otherwise it does not exist at all." So when he was asked about truth he said absolutely nothing about it. He simply called to the congregation. he called to them as

you would awaken someone from sleep. This is the only answer to the inquiry about truth.

To awaken is to attain truth. There is no other way. You are asleep and therefore you cannot see what is standing by your side, you cannot see what you really are. And in your dreams you wander far and wide in search of it, in search of something that is already there in you, in the seeker himself. You are like musk-deer wandering in search of musk.

But no matter how hard you try to find that which lives in you, you will not be able to find it. It cannot be attained by searching. Outside things can be attained by searching but one cannot attain one's self with this kind of quest. The truth is not found by searching, it is found by waking up. And that is why the speaker called out to the assembly and spoke no further. And for this same reason Mahavira, Buddha, Krishna and Christ have all been calling to you. This is not speaking, but calling. This is not a sermon, but an address, a call.

I do not intend to speak either, I intend to call. Will you hear me? Will you allow me to disturb your sleep and shatter your dreams? It may well be that your dreams are sweet and gratifying, but it is the sweet and gratifying dreams that are harmful because they will not let you wake up but make the intoxication of sleep all the more intense. I want you to witness the joy I am experiencing as the result of my awakening. And so I have decided to call you. I will not speak to you either, I will simply call you. Pardon me if my call disturbs your sleep and disperses the fog of your dreams. I am helpless. Without shattering your dreams nothing can be said about the truth. We are enveloped in

sleep and as long as this sleep continues all our actions are useless. So long as you are asleep whatever you know is nothing but dreams.

The first thing to do is to awaken from this sleep. Everything else will come later. Nothing is to be done before this. Don't attach any importance to the thoughts you think or to your actions during this sleep. Just look on them as happenings in a dream. While your own self is unknown to you it is impossible to do anything that is right, in the real sense of that word. Your knowledge, your conduct, everything is bound to be false. &Your faith, your beliefs, your convictions will all be blind. Whatsoever path you follow, it will not lead to the truth. But there is no question of walking a path at present. Do you walk along a path asleep? It is only a dream about walking.

The ignorance of the self is the sleep I am talking about to you. It is necessary to awaken from it. In order to wake up from this sleep it is also necessary to understand the factors that stand between you as you are and this awakening. Before knowing religion you should first know what religion isn't and also understand what you are holding on to as religion. Instead of awakening you this religion is more likely to be like a sleeping pill.

Karl Marx called religion an opiate, a drug containing opium to put you to sleep. Religion is definitely not an opiate but what is generally mistaken for religion is. Marx was wrong to brand religion as an opiate and you too are wrong. What you have done is mistake an opiate for religion. Therefore, it is essential to know which is religion and which is the opiate.

Let's first consider what religion is not and then we will experience what religion is. Thinking about irreligion is enough to see what religion isn't but for religion thought is not enough. To achieve religion you have to pass through a sadhana.

First of all I want to mention one thing. If you really wish to reach some level in religion or in religious life, you must begin by not taking any belief or idea for granted. If you wish to know the truth do not hold on to any preconceived notions about it. You must approach truth in perfect calm and emptiness, and without any dogmas. Preconceived notions and biases dim and distort your vision. What you know then is not the truth but a projection of your own thinking. That way, truth does not descend in you. On the contrary, you impose yourself on truth.

Hold no theory or particular view about truth. Use your own judgment. Only then will you know what is true. Otherwise you won't be able to get out of the web of the mind. What you know won't be knowledge, it will be imagination.

Man's imagination has unlimited power and this imagination is the wall between you and the truth. If you make up your mind about God, the truth and the soul beforehand, your mind will stick to that decision and will lead you to believe that you have really known something. But as a matter of fact you have known nothing and are wandering in the realm of imagination. This is not a vision of truth but a dream.

You know very well that your mind has an infinite capacity for dreaming. Our desires show us things that do not exist at all. They create mirages, and then that which

truly is becomes hidden and that which is not becomes apparent.

But you will say that dreaming only happens in sleep. It is true that dreams happen in sleep, but sleep can also be induced and in one sense you can even be asleep while you are awake. Don't you day dream?

So if one continuously has a particular idea of God and, awake or asleep, fills himself with that image, he can most definitely project that image and have a direct vision of it. It is an intensified daydream. There is actually nothing in front of the eyes, but what has been nourished and nurtured behind the eyes has come up before him. This is a projection; this is how dreams are seen.

And visions of truth based on preconceived ideas become possible as well -- and in this very fashion. A devotee of Christ has a vision of Christ, a follower of Krishna sees Krishna and someone else's disciples sees someone else. By no means is this the vision or realization of God or of truth. This is a projection of one's imagination because there cannot be two truths, two gods. Truth is one and realization is one, and one who would know truth must give up his countless concepts and imaginings. I am not asking you to give up your concepts in favor of one concept in particular, I am asking you to give up all concepts. These very concepts have given birth to many creeds and dogmas, and because of this, innumerable creeds exist but there is no religion.

To know the truth all theories about it have to be forsaken. Only those who are in a state beyond all prejudices and partialities, in a state of total innocence and independence can know it. Where there is neither concept, nor notion, nor

expectation, is where and where alone the truth can be realized. As a matter of fact, the effort to realize the truth is not the effort to realize the truth but the effort to rid ourselves of the state of dreaming.

What is the realization of truth? It is simply freedom from hallucinations. This freedom is the realization of truth. Since we are lost in dreams, what is always present appears to be absent, despite its continuous presence.

Truth exists because truth always is. it does not have to be brought from anywhere. It is ever-present. But we are not present. We are lost in the wilderness of our dreams. No, it is not the truth we have to bring to ourselves, we have to bring ourselves to the truth. It is possible, not by seeing dreams and visions about God, but by doing away with all the dreams and visions -- and waking up.

Therefore I say that the truth does not need imagination, but realization. The realization of the mind free from all imagination is the realization of the mind in a state of truth. We see the world when the mind is divided, when it is in a state of duality. We see the truth when the mind is an undivided entity, a unity.

All concepts and all beliefs are conjecture and therefore not gateways to the truth. They are obstacles and lead nowhere. On the contrary, they block your path. The path of truth does not lie through them but beyond them.

Please don't adopt any idea or concept, or form any conviction or belief about truth, because the belief you form will become an experience. And that experience is not real but mental, imaginary. These experiences are not spiritual. All beliefs about the truth that are formed in ignorance are false. Do not think about what truth is and

what it is like. All such thoughts are blind. It is like a blind man trying to imagine light. Poor thing! How can he conceive what light is! Without eyesight he cannot conceive anything about light. Whatever he may think will be fundamentally wrong. He cannot even imagine darkness accurately, let alone light. One needs eyes to see darkness as well.

What can a man without eyesight do then? I would say to him, "Don't think about light. Treat your eyes." It isn't thinking but treatment that can be helpful. But what do I see? I see him being given sermons, I see the philosophy of light being explained to him. But nobody bothers about treatment for the eyes.

And what is more surprising is that those who are sermonizing on the subject of light have never seen the light themselves! They too know about light, but they have not known light. I say this because if they had known light they would have realized the futility of all sermons and would have focused their concern and sympathy on the treatment for blindness. If the eyesight is cured, light is experienced automatically. What is required for sight is always present. If there is sight, there is light.

"Sight" and "light" are words that can lead in very different directions. Thinking about light leads to philosophy. It is the direction of thinking alone. It does not lead to experience; it is merely thought. There is a lot of walking but no destination is ever reached. There are many conclusions but none that can solve our problems. This is only natural. Even the most perfect thought about water cannot quench one's thirst the slightest bit. The way to quench one's thirst is quite different.

The path, the sadhana, is not the way of thinking, it is the treatment of sight. I have said that thinking about light is philosophy and now I want to say that vision through sight is religion. You can reach intellectual conclusions by thinking, while a sadhana gives you spiritual vision, spiritual experiences. The former is like thinking about water; the latter, like quenching one's thirst. The former is a problem; the latter, a solution.

I ask everyone this question: "Do you want to know light or to know about light?" and you -- do you want to know truth or do you want to know about truth? Do you want to know about water or do you want to quench your thirst? Your answer to these questions will decide whether you are thirsty for knowledge or whether you just want to collect information.

And don't forget that these are opposite directions. One leads to the ultimate dissolution of the ego; the other, to its peak. One makes you innocent while the other makes you complex. Knowledge destroys the ego whereas information pumps it up and inflates it all the more. All collecting, all acquiring fills the ego, and for this reason the ego is always on the lookout for more.

Thoughts are also acquisitions, although quite subtle ones. Thought also feeds the ego. The hypocrisy you find among scholars is neither spontaneous nor accidental, it is the natural outcome of thought.

Thoughts are acquired. They crowd in from the outside world, they are not born within. They are not of the soul but they are its wall sin a way. From outside, information about light can be given to a blind man but the sensation of light has to be produced in him from within. One is acquisition

and energy is the difference between information and knowledge. Acquisition comes from outside; energy, from inside.

But acquisition gives the illusion of energy. This illusion is quite strong and it nourishes the ego. Egoism is not energy, it is an illusion of energy. It is non-energy in fact, because one tiny spark of truth can destroy it, can evaporate it. It is for this reason that one's true energy is entirely free of egoism.

I hope you have been able to follow the distinction between learning and wisdom. It is imperative you understand it. False knowledge is an even greater hindrance on the path of self-realization than ignorance. False knowledge is the impression of "I know" when you really do not know . Such a false impression can easily grow out of the acquisition of others' thoughts, from learning, from schooling. This false impression also comes out of a knowledge of the scriptures, of a knowledge of words. And because of this knowledge of words men seem to think they have realized the truth.

Words become part of the memory. They form into questions and each question carries an automatic reply. One's sense of discrimination is lost in and dominated by the borrowed ideas and, before a man can look for any reply from within, the thick layer of borrowed words and ideas pops out a ready-made answer. In this way we can't work out the problem, we are robbed of its solution. If a problem is mine it is my solution alone that is required. No borrowed or secondhand solution can be of any help.

One can neither borrow life nor the solutions to its problems. The solution to a problem does not come from

outside. It is inherent in the problem. The solution evolves out of the problem. If the problem is within, the truth cannot be outside. And the truth cannot be learned therefore. It has to be laid bare. You have to discover it. It isn't through training but by realization alone that the truth can be known. And this is the fundamental difference between the one who has learned the scriptures and the one who has realized the soul. It is enough to be well versed in the scriptures as far as this world is concerned but not so in the realm of the spirit. In that sphere, it is far less than even the starting point.

You can only have information about that is not you, about the world, about the world of matter. Of these things you cannot have knowledge. Whatsoever pertains to outside can only be known from outside. You may be very close to it but it will still be far away. However tiny the distance between us might be, it will never end. It will always be there. So we can only become familiar with things that are non-us but we can never have knowledge about them. We can know about something but the something itself we cannot know.

The total elimination of distance is the prerequisite of all knowledge. Only then can you enter your inner being. But what is distant can never be anything but distant. It can only be otherwise if there is no distance in reality. Distance can be eliminated only if it is illusory. If it is real, its elimination is not possible.

There is one and only one being not distant from me. It is impossible for this being to be distant from me. I am that being. Yes, it is my own self. Of that being alone, is real knowledge possible. The distance from this being is just an

illusion because how can there be any distance from oneself? I alone am the center of my self and it is here I have my inner portal, my inner abode and the abiding throne of perfection. Knowledge of this alone is possible.
I also want to remind you of another fact: we cannot know the world, we can only make its acquaintance and gather information about it. But of the self, only knowledge is possible. So there can be no information about the self, about atman -- only knowledge of the soul is possible. That is why, in the case of objects, in the case of material things, in non-us things, it is enough to be expert in the shastras, in the scriptures, but in the case of the self it is not enough. Science is a shastra; religion is not. Science is a shastra; religion is not. Science is information about objects while religion is knowledge of the self. Science is a shastra, a scripture; religion is a sadhana, the path to realization.
I am not preaching a sermon. That approach is totally fruitless. What is required is not a sermon but treatment. I do not intend to expound on any doctrines pertaining to truth. They are altogether useless. However, what is of value is the method by which one can see truth. This method serves as a treatment for the illness and because of it the eyes open. Then you don't have to think about light, you see it straightaway. When sight is absent you have to think, but when there is sight, thinking will be out of the question. In blindness, thinking does the work of the eyes, but as soon as sight is restored thinking becomes unnecessary.
In my viewpoint, thought is not a sign of knowledge but of ignorance. Knowledge is a state of thoughtlessness. It is not thinking, it is insight. And this insight is not possible

through any dogma about truth. Dogmas merely reduce things to intellectual acquisitions and they become parts of the memory. They can never become parts of knowledge. Dogmas can be taught but they cannot change one's real personality. Like clothing, they effect a change on the outer level but the inner being remains what it was. The spirit remains untouched by them and the veil, the cover, takes on a new form and a new color. If you are this way, wisdom cannot descend upon you. On the contrary, you will fall into the ditch of hypocrisy.

There is a great gulf between a man's being and knowledge. He is one thing and what he knows is quite another thing. His personality is split in two. There is both conflict and duality between his inner being and his outer shell. And the natural result of this is hypocrisy. Such a man begins to present himself as someone who is not really there in him, and begins to hide the one who is. This acting is irreligious. It not only ruins the lives of others but one's own life as well. This is self-deception but it passes for being religious. The intellectual teachings of dogmas, of doctrines, can only do this much: they can change the outer wrapping for a spiritual revolution some other approach is necessary. The approach should not be one of doctrine but of sadhana, of walking the path of self-realization. It is not the approach of sermons but of treatment. It is not the approach of thinking about truth but of opening the eyes to truth. Religion is the method of opening the eyes. If your eyes open the vision of God becomes easy. But doctrines will not open your eyes. On the contrary, those who are deluded by them forget that their eyes are closed and that the truths they discuss have not been seen by them with their own

eyes but by the eyes of others. The truth seen by another is like a meal eaten by another. It has no purpose whatsoever for anyone else.

The realization of truth is wholly private and personal and is by no means transferable. It can neither be received nor given. It has to be attained by oneself. It cannot be stolen or accepted in charity. It is not a piece of property, it is one's own self. Truth is not property, it is one's own self and it is therefore non-transferable. So far no one has ever given it to anyone. Nor will anybody in the future ever be able to give it to anyone because the moment it is given it ceases to be the truth, it becomes an object. An object can be given or taken. Truth has to be attained within oneself, by oneself. It is subjective. In fact, it is not really to be attained -- one has to become it. It is your own being, your own existence.

So where does the question of learning truth come in? It must be discovered. Learning only forms layers over the self. All outside teachings only cover truth. Whatever comes from outside can only cover. Covering is the only thing possible from outside. And the garments of thought continue to cover the self more and more. Strip off these garments and be naked. Throw all these garment away. In order to know your self you have to unlearn, not learn. When all the outside guests have gone you will know the one who is not a guest, but the host.

The truth cannot be taught but the method of knowing truth can. Today, no one speaks of this method. Although there is a lot of talk about truth, there is no talk about the method of realizing the truth. There can be no greater mistake than this. It is clinging to the body and missing life. As a result

of this there are countless religions, but no religion with a capital R.

The numerous sects that masquerade under the name of religions are not religion at all. There can only be one religion. There can be no adjective to describe it. It is without any qualifying term. Dharma means dharma -- religion means religion. In my language you can't say "this dharma", "that dharma". Where there is "this" and "that" there is no religion.

These sects have come into being because of the many doctrines and theories about truth and they will continue to exist as long as people demand theories and doctrines. Doctrines consist of words and sects form around these very words. The words become causes of conflict, feeding animosities and petty hates. These words divide man from man. and how strange it is! The people believe that the very words that divide man from man will unite man with God! That which divides man from man cannot possibly unite him with God, with truth, nor with his self.

This splitting up of religion into sects can be traced to various doctrines, to words, to beliefs, to opinions. All of this is based on ignorance and not on knowledge. Truth has no sect. All sects evolve out of doctrines. As soon as a man knows the truth he is free from sects and at that very moment he enters religion -- a religion that is neither Hindu nor Jain, Christian nor Mohammedan, but simply religion -- unqualified, nothing but light, nothing but consciousness. Religion is truly the realization of one's self.

A sect is not religious. What does organization have to do with religion? All organizations are political or social; they are all worldly. They are based on fear of one another and

where there is fear there is hatred. They come into existence not out of truth, but for security. Be it a nation, a society or a sect, all are born out of fear, and the satisfaction of what is born out of fear lies in causing fear in others.

All sects are exactly like this. They do not intend to make anyone religious, they want to increase their numbers. Numbers are power and guarantees of security. They are both self-protection and the capacity to attack. Sects have been like this all along. They are still like this and will continue to be the same. They haven't united man and religion, they've torn him away from it.

Dharma, religion, is not a social phenomenon, it is purely and simply the most personal transformation. It has nothing to do with others; it is concerned with one's own self alone. It isn't concerned with what a man does with others but what he does with himself. Dharma is concerned with how you behave with yourself in your total isolation and loneliness.

What are you in your total isolation? That is what you must know -- who you are. Only the knowledge of your being will lead you to religion. There is no other way to lead someone to religion. No temple, no mosque, no church can take me to the place where I am. You don't have to climb any outside stairs to get there. All temples are outside. All temples are part of samsara, of the world, and you cannot reach the self through their doors. No journey in the outer world can be a pilgrimage to truth, to the holy place. That place is within, where one has the experience of religion and where the mystery, joy and beauty of life are

discovered. Without these everything is miserable; everything is useless, meaningless.

In order to know the self you have to go inside, not outside. But all man's senses take him outwards. They all move outside. His eyes look outwards, his hands spread outwards, his legs move outwards and even his mind reflects and echoes external phenomena. And this is why he has erected idols, images of god, and has created temples to truth. It is so his eyes can see God and his feet can make a pilgrimage to truth! We have created this self-deception ourselves; we have taken this cup of poison with our own hands. And now we waste away our lives nad spend them in stupor, brought about by this poison and self-deception. To suit the convenience of our senses we have visualized religion as being outside ourselves and so have directed our sight outwards. But you have to go behind the scenes to know dharma, to know religion. Your knowledge and consciousness of the world comes through the medium of the senses. You cannot possibly know the self by the same route. It is not possible to know the one who knows, to know the one who is knowledge, like another person or an object can be known. The seer, the power to see, cannot be looked at like an ordinary object. Knowledge can neither be transferred nor degraded into an object. And the whole problem is because this simple fact has not been understood. People search for god as if he were an external object. How stupid this is! God is not to be searched for, he is hidden in the seeker himself.

Truth is within you. It is within me. And it is not that it will be within you tomorrow, it is in you here and now, at this very moment. I am. My being itself is my truth. And

whatever I see may not be the truth, it may all be a dream. I see dreams too and while I see them they seem to be true. You may all be a dream for me. It may well be that I am in a dream and you are not present here at all. But the seer cannot be false. He cannot be in a dream because if he were he would not be able to see that it is a dream. A dream cannot see a dream. Untruth cannot know untruth. Seeing a dream requires someone who is not a dream himself. Even to see untruth a true seer is necessary. Therefore I say I am the truth. Truth is my being. I don't have to go anywhere in search of it.

You only have to dig out the truth from within yourself. Just as you dig out a well, you have to dig truth out. There are always a few layers of stones and earth covering the spring of water, but as soon as you remove those layers the spring is freed. In the same way your self is pressed down by layers of other things, of things that belong to non-self. You only have to break through these layers and what you have been searching for through countless past lives is attained.

So far you have been unable to attain the truth because you have been searching for it far and wide, while as a matter of fact it has always been very near. It is really the one who is searching. You must dig out the well of your soul. And meditation is the means to that end. With the spade of meditation you have to remove the layers of earth, the layers of otherness that have piled up on the self. It is the only remedy, the only treatment. This is what I intend to talk about.

First of all, it is necessary to know what it is that has covered up your own being, your very nature. What is it

that hides you from yourself? Can't you see it? Can't you see what the covering is? When you go inside what do you find?

Hume has said, "whenever I have gone inside I have been unable to find anything but thoughts." Hume did not locate any soul, nor will you find yours in this way. Hume saw only the covering layers and came back; he went only as far as the shell and returned. It is only when you break the shell open that you will see what is inside. This is just like a man who goes to a lake and seeing the surface covered with moss and leaves returns to say there is no lake at all. Generally this is what happens. We go inside every day, see the covering of thoughts and return. Thoughts always surround the self and you know nothing but thoughts. Thoughts are your world and he who lives in thoughts alone is a worldly man. To know anything beyond thought is the beginning of becoming religious. To know the state of thoughtlessness, to know what is beyond thought is to enter the domain of religion.

It may be that your thoughts are not about this world but are about the soul, about God, and you may be under the illusion that you are religious. I want to smash this illusion of yours. All thoughts are a covering, an outer shell. They are all desires, passions, because they are external, directed outwardly. There can be no thinking about the self. There is knowledge but not thought about the self. Thoughts are a covering, a shell.

Thoughtlessness removes the covering. Thoughtlessness is meditation. When there is no thinking, it is then we come to know the one hidden by our thoughts. When there are no clouds the blue sky comes into view. My friends, there is a

sky within you as well. Remove the cloud of thoughts so it can be seen, so it can be known. This is possible. When the mind is at rest and there are no thoughts in it, then in the silence, in that deep thoughtlessness, in the total absence of thought, truth is seen.

What can we do to bring this about? We must do a very simple thing but you will find it very difficult because you have become very complex. What is possible for a new born baby is impossible for you. The child simply looks and does not think. He just sees. And just seeing is wonderful. This is the secret, the key that can unlock the gate of truth.

I am seeing you. I am just seeing you. Do you follow me? I am just seeing you; I am not thinking. And then an unprecedented calm, a living silence descends upon me and then everything is seen and everything is heard but nothing within is disturbed. There is no reaction inside; there are no thoughts. There is only darshan, only seeing.

Right-awareness is the method of meditation. You have to see, only to see what is without and what is within. There are objects without, thoughts within. You have to look at them without any purpose whatsoever. There is no purpose, just seeing. You are a witness, a detached witness, and you are simply seeing. This observing, this watchfulness, gradually leads you into peace, into emptiness, into the void, into thoughtlessness. Try it and you will know. As thoughts dissolve, consciousness awakens and comes to life. Just casually stop a while -- anywhere, anytime. Just look and listen and be a witness to the world and to yourself. Don't think. Just be a witness and see what happens. Then let this witnessing spread. let is pervade all

your physical and mental activities. Allow it to be with you always. If there is witnessing your ego will cease to be and you will see, will realize what you really are. The "I" will die and the self will be attained.

In this sadhana of witnessing, in this observing of one's mental state, an easy transformation, an easy change over, takes place between what is being witnessed and the one that is the witness. As you observe your thoughts you get glimpses of the one that is observing. And then one day the seer appears in all his majesty and glory and all your poverty and wretchedness come to an end.

This is not a sadhana one can practice only once in a while and still attain liberation. This is to be practiced continuously, night and day. As one practices witnessing, as one moves more into the state of witnessing, that state becomes more stable and begins to be present all the time. Gradually it begins to be with you all the time, both awake and asleep. It even begins to be present in sleep. And when this happens, when it begins to be present even in sleep you can be certain it has gone deep within, that it has spread its roots far and wide. Today you are asleep even when you are awake. Tomorrow you will be awake even when you are asleep.

This witnessing dissolves thoughts by awakening us from our dreams and from our sleep. The waves dissolve in a mind free from thoughts and dreams. The mind becomes calm, waveless, without a tremor, just as the sea is calm when there are no waves, just as the flame of a lamp does not flicker when there are no breezes blowing into the house. It is in such a state that God is known, the one who

is the self, who is me, who is truth. And then the gates to the palace of God open.
This gate, this entrance, does not lie in the shastras, in words -- it lies int he self. That is why I say not to dig elsewhere but to dig within yourself. Don't go anywhere else. Go into yourself. I have explained to you how to go in.
From your serenity and the sparkle in your eyes I conclude you have understood what I have had to say. But this understanding alone is not enough. It is not understanding but spiritual experience alone that can become the foundation of a life of truth. Walk a bit in the direction I have indicated and see. Just proceed a little in that direction and see. Even if you only walk a little you will have gone a long way because when you move towards the truth, when you near it, you come under the influence of its pull -- and then you do not walk at all, you are simply drawn to it.
And finally, remember that a man who keeps walking will reach his destination one day. No step taken in God's direction is in vain. I bear witness to this truth. How I want you too to realize this truth even for a moment so you can bear witness to it as well! It is so near to you. it is just a matter of your awakening. The sun is already up. You only have to open your eyes to see it.
I invite you to open your eyes. Will you hear my call and open your eyes? The decision is yours and yours alone. To open or not to open?

The Perfect Way
Chapter #9

Chapter title: The Final Evening
7 June 1964 pm

[THE FIRST QUESTION IS MISSING]

The truth cannot be known before you actually realize it. And knowing something about truth is quite different from knowing truth. Whatever you know about truth, it is bound to be untrue. It is untrue because in the absence of personal experience it simply cannot be understood. It is untrue, not from the point of view of the speaker, but from that of the listener.

If I say anything about truth will you understand it in the same way in which I say it? It isn't possible because to understand something in exactly the same way you would have to be the same as me and in the same situation. By the time what I say reaches you it becomes untrue. This happens because I can only speak words and their interpretation has to come from you. The meaning will come from you and will therefore not be different from you. The words will be mine; the meaning and interpretation, yours.

That meaning or interpretation cannot be anything more than you are at present nor can it be beyond your present experience. Do you think you read Krishna when you read the GITA If you do, you are greatly mistaken. My friend, you are only reading yourself in the GITA -- otherwise how could there be so many interpretations of, and commentaries on, the GITA In every shastra, in every scripture, we see our own image and each religion is nothing more than a mirror.

Before knowing truth only words can be known, not the truth. Those words will be from others, from the holy books, from the avatars and teerthankaras, from the enlightened ones, but the meanings and interpretations will be yours. Your "I" will be in them. Isn't this the reason there is so much antagonism and that there are so many differences between the so-called religions? Could any opposition or antagonism exist between Buddha and Christ? The difference of interpretation, the opposition, the antagonism is between you and me and we just carry it all on in their names.

Religion comes from those who know the truth and sects are organized by those who simply hear and believe. And so there are numerous sects -- but there is only one religion. The experience of knowing the truth is unique and the experience is identical for all. But this is not the case with belief. Knowledge is one, unique, but beliefs are as numerous as there are persons who believe.

Religion is the outcome of darshan, of the vision of truth, but religions are the outcome of not seeing the truth. Religion is founded by those who know but religions are organized by those who do not know -- and even with their well-meant efforts, religion becomes irreligion. Throughout his whole history man has been a victim of this curse, of this contradiction in terms.

Question 1

THE SECOND QUESTION: AREN'T WE ABLE TO THINK ABOUT TRUTH WITHOUT FORMING SOME CONCEPT ABOUT IT?

I am not asking you to think at all. Thinking can never go beyond what you know, and if you do not know truth how can you possibly think about it? Thinking always stays within the boundaries of your experience. It is just brooding about knowing. Thinking is never creative, it is merely repetitive. What is unknown cannot be known by thinking. If you want to know the unknown you must get out of what you know. To enter the unknown you have to leave the shores of the known.

It is therefore better not to form any concept about truth at all. That concept will be totally untrue, a lifeless word without a living meaning. That word may be respected by tradition, revered by thousands, upheld by the shastras, but for your it will have no value at all. It is one thing to see the broken image of truth through the narrow and limited framework of that word, and quite another when frameworks fall away and you have a look at the whole expanse of the sky.

The sky is not hemmed in by anything. Nor is the truth contained by anything. All frameworks are manmade; all concepts are manmade. If you want to know the truth step out of your frameworks. Forget words and thoughts and so-called knowledge and leave the known so the unknown can come in. And give up all manmade concepts. Then you will know the one who is nobody's creation, but the basis of all creation itself.

Question 2

THE THIRD QUESTION: HOW CAN WE POSSIBLY KNOW TRUTH WITHOUT THE HELP OF THE

SHASTRAS? ISN'T IT ONLY THROUGH THEM WE CAN KNOW TRUTH?

Do you mean to say that if all the scriptures, all the shastras, were destroyed that truth would also be destroyed with them? Is truth dependent on the shastras or are the shastras dependent on truth? My friend, the truth has never been attained by means of the shastras. On the contrary, the shastras were obtained, were revealed after the truth had been realized. It is not the shastras that are of value, it is the truth which is of value. The fundamental thing is the truth, not the shastras. And if truth could be attained through the shastras it would be a very cheap truth indeed. You could attain it without making any change in yourself.

But the shastras can only fill your memory, they cannot give you knowledge of the self. And in the direction of truth a trained memory doesn't help at all. For truth, you have to pay the price of self-transformation. The shastras can make you a pundit, a scholar, but they cannot give you knowledge. The shastras can give birth to more shastras though. This is only natural. The material can only produce the material. But how can knowledge come out of this? Knowledge is a form of consciousness. It cannot be born out of unconscious matter. The shastras are without life, without consciousness. This is not so for the truth. The shastras can only enrich the unconscious, lifeless memory. Conscious knowledge cannot be attained through them but can only be attained by going into oneself.

You ask how the truth can be known without the help of the shastras. To this I ask how can you know the truth as long as you confine yourself to the shastras? It is a false notion

that truth can be obtained from someone else, from the shastras or from a guru, because this does not allow you to search for it within yourself. This idea is a big obstacle. This is also a search in samsara, in the world. Bear in mind that the shastras are part of the world as well. Whatever is outside is the world. The truth is there, inside and not outside -- within, where the self is. The self is the real shastra. It is also the only real guru. By entering the self, truth is attained.

Question 3
THE FOURTH QUESTION: IS WHAT INTELLECT SUGGESTS TO BE THE TRUTH NOT TRUE?

Intellect is thinking. Intellect is not knowledge. Thinking is groping in the dark, it is not knowing. The truth cannot be thought -- it is seen, realized. It is not realized through the intellect but is realized when the intellect is quiet and empty. This state of inner knowledge is intuition. Intuition is not thinking, it is insight. To one who wants to see truth, intuition is like acquisition of sight to a blind man. No one ever gets anywhere by thinking. It is an endless groping. A blind man may grope for years but will he be able to attain light? Just as there is no relation between groping and light, there is none between thinking and truth. They are altogether different dimensions.

Question 4
THE FIFTH QUESTION: DO YOU NOT CONSIDER A VISION OF KRISHNA OR OF CHRIST A SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE?

No, this is not a spiritual experience. No vision is a spiritual experience because on that plane all experiences are psychological. As long as there is the vision or realization of someone else it cannot be the realization of the self. Even in such experiences you are still outside yourselves, you have still not come into your selves. That coming into one's self takes place when there are no outer experiences. When consciousness is not related to any object it settles spontaneously on the self. Only a consciousness without object can settle on the self.

Outside myself I am surrounded by two worlds, the world of matter and the world of the mind. Both of these are outside me. Not only is matter outside, the mind is outside as well. Because the mind is inside the body it creates the illusion of being inner, but the mind is not within. The self is inner, behind the mind, beyond the mind.

We do not mistake physical experiences for spiritual experiences, but our psychological experiences do create the illusion of being spiritual because the mental images we see are different from those of the world we know and we also see them after we have closed our eyes. But among mental experiences we do not think of dreams as spiritual experiences even though they too only appear when we shut our eyes and even though awakening, contact with the outside world, puts an end to them.

There are certain mental experiences that create the illusion of being real and spiritual. These are mental projections. The mind has the capacity to hypnotize itself to such a degree that it can see the dreams it sees with the eyes closed even after th eyes have been opened. This happens

in a kind of waking sleep. Thus we see God as we want to -- Krishna or Christ. Such visions are only mental projections in which we don't see what really is but whomsoever it is we wish to see. These experiences are neither spiritual nor divine. They are simply psychological experiences and are caused by self-hypnosis.

Question 5
THE SIXTH QUESTION: HOW CAN GOD BE SEEN THEN?

Here, the word "seen" is misleading. It leads one to suppose there is someone to be seen, and the word "God" itself creates the illusion of a person, a personality. There is no person life God. There is godliness; there is a force. There is no person, but a force. God is an infinite ocean of energy, an infinite ocean of consciousness. He manifests himself in all forms. As the creator, god is not separate; he himself is the creation. He himself is creative reality. He is life. Being surrounded by the ego creates the illusion of being different, of being separate from life. This is your distance, your separation from God. And in actual fact, no distance or separation is possible -- the very illusion of "I" is the distance. This separation is because of ignorance. In fact, ignorance is the separation. As such there is not real separation at all.
The infinite, boundless, creative life-force that is realized with the dissolution of the ego is God. The experience one has after the death of "I", after the extinction of the ego is the true vision of God. And then what do I see? Nowhere do I see "I"; nowhere do I see "that", the "other". That

which is in the waves of the ocean is in me; that which is in the new spring blossoms is in me; that which is in autumn's falling leaves is in me. Nowhere am I separate from the cosmic being. I am in it; I am it. This is the true vision of God. A seer has said, "Tattvamasi svetaketu -- thou art that." The day you feel and experience this you have realized God. Whatever falls short of this or is different from this is all imagination.

What is the vision of God if it is not the identification of the self with him? What is the vision of the ocean for a raindrop? It can only lose its identity and become the ocean itself! As long as it is a raindrop the ocean is different from it, very far away from it, but once it loses its identity, its entity, it has become one with the ocean. In truth, the drop has become the ocean.

Do you search for God? Seek the attainment fo godliness. The path of this search is the same as the raindrop's in its search for the ocean.

Question 6

THE SEVENTH QUESTION: I HAVE FAITH IN GOD BUT YOU SAY FAITH IS HARMFUL. SHOULD I GIVE UP MY FAITH?

Isn't the answer to your question to be found in the question itself? What value is a faith one can hold on to or let go as one wishes? It is just a blind mental concept which clearly has no worth at all. That is blind faith and the less blindness you have in life the better.

I do not ask you to believe, I ask you to know. Only a state of mind that one has reached by knowledge, by realization,

has any value. You can term it right-belief if you wish, but it is not belief, it is knowledge. Don't believe in some vague truism. Search for truth. Seek it out. But don't hold on to any belief or concept. This is a sign of weakness of the mind. It is lethargy; it is a lack of caring. It is an injurious way to save yourself from the work of seeing your self. Blind faith is an escape from sadhan, from the effort for self-realization. In a sense it is nothing short of suicide because once one falls into this culvert one becomes incapable of climbing the peak of truth. These paths lead you in two opposite directions. One is the ditch you fall into; the other, the lofty summit you have to climb.

Faith is an easy thing because a man is not required to do anything. In that sense, knowledge is not so easy. Knowledge is the complete transformation of life. Faith is the outer apparel; knowledge, the inner revolution. Rather than allowing you to reach the peak of atonement towards which your spirit is striving, a simple faith can easily throw you back into the slumber of blind belief. Religion is not faith but unfortunately, religions are. What is religion to me does not coincide with what the concepts of the world's religions appear to be. On that score Karl Marx was right to brand religions as opiates but profoundly wrong to say so about real religion!

You have been told to have faith in the shastras, faith in the words of God, faith in the teachers. I do not say so at all. I say: have faith in yourself. It is only by knowing your self that you will be able to know what the shastras have said, what god has said. For one who has no faith in himself, following any other faith will be in vain. Can you stand on someone else's feet? Buddha said, "Be your own lamp. Be

your own refuge. There is no proper refuge but the refuge of one's own self." And I say the same thing.

One night a certain sadhu was bidding farewell to another sadhu who had been his guest when the latter said, "The night is very dark. How can I see to go?" The host lit a lamp and gave it to his guest. But as the guest was going down the staircase the host blew out the lamp. The place was enveloped in darkness again. Then the host said, "My lamp will not be able to light your path. For that you must have a lamp of your own." The guest understood the sadhu's advice and this understanding become such a lamp on the path of his own life that it could never be extinguished again.

Sadhana is not just a part of life, it has to permeate the whole of one's life -- standing, sitting, speaking, laughing. It has to be there all the time and only then does it become spontaneous. Religion does not consist of any particular act, worship or prayer either. It is a way of living in which everything in life becomes worship and prayer. It is not a ritual, it is a way of life. In this religion, it is not one's acts that are religious, it is the individual who is religious. No behavior is religious, life is religious.

Only by being free from the bondage of the ego, of the "I", can consciousness rise above the individual and become one with the totality. Just as an earthen jar separates water from the ocean, the clay pot of the ego keeps the individual away from the truth.

What is this ego, this "I",? Have you ever searched for it in yourself? It only exists because you have never looked for it. When I myself tried to find it I found that it did not exist. In some quiet moment go deep into yourself and look. You

won't find the "I" anywhere. The "I" does not exist. It is a mere illusion that we have ushered into existence because of its social utility. Just as you have a name, you have your ego too. Both are utilities, of value from the practical point of view, but they are not real. That which is in you has neither name nor ego.

There is no such thing as entering into nirvana, into moksha, into liberation, into the soul, into the atman. How can you enter a place you have never left? So what happens then? As I said, there is no such thing as an entry into nirvana, but what happens is that the world we were in dissolves like a dream and we find ourselves in our selves. As such, this experience is not at all like an entering, it is more like finding yourself on your bed at the abrupt termination of a journey you were taking in a dream. Since you haven't gone anywhere there is no question of returning; since you haven't lost anything, talk of achieving something is meaningless. You are only dreaming a dream; your traveling and searching are in a dream. You don't have to go anywhere or find anything. All you have to do is awaken.

The realization of the truth is always perfect, always complete. And that experience, that attainment, is not gradual. It is not evolution, it is revolution. Does anyone awaken from a dream progressively, gradually? Either there is a dream or there is no dream. There is no middle stage. Yes, the sadhana may take a long time but the realization of truth takes place like a flash of lightening -- in a moment and in all its totality. Realization does not take any time to happen as such, because whatever happens over a period of time is always gradual, progressive. The sadhana occurs in

and occupies a span of time, but realization does not take any time at all. It is beyond time.

For the realization of the truth, a sadhana of goodness and renunciation is not enough. This is a partial sadhana. For the realization of truth it is essential to rise above both good and evil, love and hate, above both samsara and moksha, the world and emancipation. That state, in our language, is called veetaragata, the state beyond both attachment and detachment. Veetaraga chaitanya, desireless consciousness, is the state where there is neither love nor hate, neither good nor evil, but where there is only pure chaitanya, pure consciousness, steadfastness in the self. The realization of truth only happens in this state.

You must cultivate an unconcerned and watchful mind. You must weave that mental state into yourself like the very breath that is interwoven throughout your life both night and day. You should be unconcerned and watchful in every activity, practicing no-action in action -- just as an actor is quite aware that he is acting when he plays a role. He does not become concerned with the character and lose his consciousness in it. Although acting, he remains detached. You have to become like that and remain like that.

If a man is watchful while engaged in activity it is not difficult for him to remain unconcerned. It is the natural consequence of observation. I am walking on a road. If I observe the act of walking fully, I will feel that I am walking and at the same time that I am not walking. Walking is being done on the physical plane but there is no walking on the level of consciousness. You will feel the same while eating or while doing other things. There will

be one point in you which will remain just a witness. It will neither be the doer nor the enjoyer. The deeper the experience of this witnessing becomes, the more the feelings of happiness and of sorrow will gradually dissolve -- and then you will realize that absolute and pure consciousness that is atman, your self.

What is the mind? It is both the collector and the collection of whatever is perceived by the senses. Anyone who considers the mind as his self has mistaken the servant for the master. And if you want to realize your real self you will have to give up what you know and will have to follow one who knows. Your mind is only what you know about; the self is the means by which you know all.

The witness, the knower is the self. This self is different from birth and death, different from maya and moksha, from illusion and liberation. It is only a witness, a witness to all things -- to light, to darkness, to the world, to nirvana. The self is beyond all dualities.

As soon as a person knows this witness he becomes like a lotus -- separate from the mud of which it was born and detached from the water in which it lives. Such a man is calm and composed in all life's varied situations -- in pleasure and in pain, in honor and in humiliation -- because he is only a witness. Whatever happens, happens. But it does not happen to him, it happens in front of him. He witnesses. He becomes just like a mirror. A mirror reflects thousands of images but no mark is left behind.

An old sadhu came to the shore of a river with a young companion. The young man asked, "How shall we cross this river?" The old man replied, "In such a way that your feet don't get wet." The young man heard him and like a

flash of lightning something became very clear and evident to him. The river had come and gone but the mysterious maxim had penetrated deeply into his heart. It became the guiding principle of his life. He learned to cross the river so his feet did not get wet!

You should become like this young man -- like the man who eats and yet fasts, like the man who is in the midst of a crowd and yet alone, like the man who is sleeping and yet awake -- for only such a man attains liberation in the world and finds God in every stone.

Someone has said that the mind should not contain the world and the world should not occupy the mind. This is the tenet to be followed. And if the first half of the maxim if perfected, the second half follows automatically. The first half is the cause; the latter, its effect. But those who begin with the second half make an error. So therefore I say only this much of the maxim: don't let the mind contain the world. What follows this is not a maxim, it is the consequence. If the mind does not contain the world, the world will never occupy the mind. That which is not contained by the mind can never occupy it.

In samadhi there is no object to the known, therefore the state of samadhi cannot be called knowledge. It certainly isn't knowledge in the ordinary sense but at the same time it isn't ignorance either. There is nothing there with which to know. It is different from both knowledge and ignorance. It is neither knowing nor not-knowing any object for there is no object at all. There is only subjectivity. There is only the one who knows. There is no knowledge of any object, there is just pure knowledge -- consciousness empty of content.

Someone once asked a sadhu, "What is meditation?" He replied, "To be in that which is near is dhyana, meditation." What is near you? Except for your self, isn't everything apart from you? You alone are near your self. But you are forever leaving yourself and are always far away from it. You are always somewhere in the neighborhood. To be in the self and not in the neighborhood is meditation. When you are nowhere and your mind too is nowhere, even then you are somewhere. That somewhere is meditation.

When I am nowhere I am in my self. That is not being in the neighborhood; that is not being away. That is inwardness; that is intimacy. Only by being there can one awaken to the truth. You have lost everything by being in the neighborhood but it can all be regained by being in your self.

I do not ask you to renounce the world, I ask you to transform yourself. By denying the world you will not change, but if you change, the world will cease to exist for you. True religion is not world-rejecting, it is self-transforming. Don't think of the world but of your outlook in relation to the world. You have to change that. Because of it, there is the world and there is bondage. Once the outlook is changed, the whole creation changes. There is no fault in samsara, in the world. The fault lies in you and your outlook.

Yoga is the science of the transformation of life, of self-transformation. Through self-analysis physical science reaches the atom and atomic energy but yoga reaches the spirit and spiritual energy. Through the former, the mystery hidden in matter is discovered; through the latter, the world hidden in the self is revealed.

But yoga is more important than science because there is nothing in this universe more important than the self. Man is out of balance because he knows a lot about matter but nothing about his self. He has learned how to dive into the unfathomable depths of the ocean and how to fly to amazing heights but has forgotten how to retire into his self. This is a suicidal state. This is our misery exactly. Yoga can restore this balance and therefore the teaching of yoga is a necessity.
Only through yoga can the birth of a new man, in the true sense, take place -- and only then can the foundations of a new humanity be laid. Science has conquered matter and now man has to conquer himself. His conquest of matter has made it imperative that he now know and conquer himself. Otherwise, his mastery of the unlimited power of matter, of atomic power, will cause his own destruction because power in the hands of the ignorant is always fatal. If science falls into the hands of the ignorant, the combination of science and ignorance is bound to be destructive -- but if science is in the hands of those with knowledge it will lead to the birth of an unprecedented creative energy that will transform the world into heaven. Therefore I say to you that the future and the destiny of man are now in the hands of yoga. Yoga is the science of the future, for it is the science of man.

The Perfect Way

Chapter #10
Chapter title: The Farewell
8 June 1964 am

One and only one moment of determination, of sankalpa, of complete determination is enough, whereas a whole life without it is nothing. Remember it is not time but determination that is the important thing. The achievements of the world are accomplished in the realm of time and those of truth in the realm of determination. Sankalpa, determination, must live in your sadhana.

So what shall I say to you today? We shall be separating tonight and I see that your hearts are already heavy at the prospect. It has only been five days since we all came together here in this lonely spot. Who thought of departure then?

But don't forget that parting is inherent in coming together. They are two sides of the same coin. Although they appear to be different they always go together. Because they show up separately and on different occasions we are deluded into the false belief that they are not connected. But if you go a little deeper you will find that meeting is itself a parting, that happiness is also grief and that even birth itself is death. Indeed there is hardly any difference between coming and going -- or rather, there is no difference at all. It is the same in life. You have hardly come when the process of going begins, and what appears to our minds to be staying on is merely a preparation for leaving.

Really, what is the distance between birth and death? The distance between them can be endless. If life, if this distance between birth and death, becomes a pursuit for self-realization, this distance can have no end to it at all. If life becomes a sadhana, a journey to self-realization, death can become moksha, liberation. While there is not much

distance between birth and death, the span between moksha and death is infinite. That distance is as great as the one between body and soul, between a dream and the truth. That distance is much greater than all other distances put together. No two points are greater apart than moksha and death.

The illusion that "I am the body" is death; the realization that "I am the soul" is liberation, salvation, moksha. And your life is an opportunity for the realization of truth. If this opportunity for the realization of truth. If this opportunity is used properly and not wasted in vain, the distance between birth and death becomes infinite.

As well, there can be a great distance between your coming here and your departure -- a tremendous distance, in just the few days we have spent here. Isn't it possible you will not be the same when you return as when you came? Isn't it possible you may return as entirely new and changed people?

If you want it, this revolution or transformation can take place in a moment. Five days are too many. If even five previous births have been too few, why talk of five days? Just one moment of will, of complete determination is enough. A whole life without determination is nothing. Remember that determination and time are the important things. The achievements of the world are made in time; those of truth, in determination. It is the intensity of sankalpa, of determination, that gives a fathomless depth and an infinite expanse to a moment. As a matter of fact, in the intensity of sankalpa time ceases to exist and only eternity remains.

Determination is the door to liberate you from time and unite you with eternity. let your determination be deep and intense. Let it pervade your every breath. Let it be in your memory, asleep or awake. Only through it can a new birth take place, a birth which knows no death. This is real birth. There is a birth, the birth of the physical body, that inevitably ends in death but I deo not call this real birth. How can something that ends in death be the beginning of life?

But there is another birth that does not end in death. It is the real birth. Its fulfillment is in immortality. It was for this birth I invited you here, and to this birth I have been calling you for the past few days. We gathered here for that very birth. But merely coming together here is of no value. If you become whole, if you become one and call from the thirst of your own being, then the determination of your entire being will take you into the presence of truth. The truth is very near but you need determination, you need will to approach it. The thirst for truth is there in you but determination is necessary as well. This thirst becomes a sadhana only when it goes hand-in-hand with determination.

What does "determination" mean?

A man once asked a fakir the way to attain God. The fakir looked into his eyes and saw thirst. The fakir was on his way to the river so he asked the man to accompany him and promised to show him the way to attain God after they'd bathed.

They arrived at the river, as soon as the man plunged into the water the fakir grabbed the man's head and pushed it down into the water with great force. The man began to

struggle to free himself from the fakir's grip. his life was in danger. He was much weaker than the fakir but his latent strength gradually began to stir and soon it became impossible for the fakir to hold him down. The man pushed himself to the limit and was eventually able to get out of the river. He was shocked. The fakir was laughing loudly and he could not understand his behavior.

After the man had calmed down the fakir asked him, "when you were under the water what desires did you have in your mind?" The man replied, "Desires! there weren't desires, there was just one desire -- to get a breath of air." the fakir said, "This is the secret of attaining God. This is determination. And your determination awakened all your latent powers."

In a real moment of intense determination great strength is generated -- and a man can leave the world and enter truth. By determination alone one can pass from the world into truth; by determination alone one can awaken from the dream to the truth.

At this time, at the hour of our parting, I want to remind you of this: determination is needed. And what else? Determination is needed, plus continuity in your sadhana. Your sadhana must be continuous. Have you ever seen a waterfall coming down from the mountains? It is a continuous stream of water that can even break huge rocks. If a man constantly endeavors to break the rocks of ignorance, those rocks that seemed impossible to break in the beginning will one day turn to dust. And then the man will find his way.

The path is there to be found, without a doubt, but don't try to locate one that's ready-made. You have to find it

yourself, by your own efforts. And what dignity this brings a man! How much to our credit it is that we attain truth by our own efforts! Mahavira wanted to convey this when he spoke of truth attained by labor.

The truth is not alms given in charity, it is an achievement. You need determination, continuous effort and one more thing: infinite patience. Truth is infinite, endless, and therefore in waiting for it infinite patience is necessary. God appears only after endless waiting. Those who have no patience cannot attain God. I wanted to remind you of this as well.

Finally, I am reminded of a story I will pass along to you. Although quite imaginary, it is perfectly true.

An angel passed a spot where an old sadhu was sitting. The sadhu said to the angel, "Please ask God how long it will take for me to attain moksha, to achieve liberation." Near the old sadhu a very young, newly-initiated sannyasin was living. He was sitting under a banyan tree. The angel also asked the young sannyasin if he wanted him to ask God about his moksha as well. But the sannyasin did not say a word. He was quiet, calm and silent.

After some time the angel returned. He said to the old sadhu, "I asked God about your moksha. He says it will take three more births." The old man grew furious and his eyes became bloodshot. He threw away his rosary and said, "Three more births! It's atrocious!"

Then the angel went to the young man and said to him, "I also asked God about you. He said you will have to practice your sadhana for as many births as there are leaves on the banyan tree under which you are sitting." The young sannyasin felt very happy and his eyes filled with tears of

joy. He jumped up and began to dance. "In that case I have attained! There are so many trees in this world and so many leaves on each of them! and if I will attain God in only as many births as there are leaves on this small banyan tree then I have almost attained him."

This is how the crop of truth is harvested. And do you know the end of this story? The young sannyasin kept on dancing and dancing and that very moment he became free and attained to God. That moment of tranquil and infinite love and patience was everything. That very moment was emancipation. This I call infinite patience. And he who has infinite patience achieves everything here and now. This mental attitude itself is the final attainment. Are you willing to wait this long? With this question I bid you farewell. May God give you strength so that the river of your life can reach the ocean of truth. This is both my wish and my prayer.